Walter Adams.

This book is DUE on the last date stamped below

PR
5839
W69t
v.3 Wilson -

Southern Branch
of the
University of California
Los Angeles

Form L 1

PR
5839
W69t
V.3

C. W. Hawes

WILSON'S

TALES OF THE BORDERS,

AND OF SCOTLAND,

HISTORICAL, TRADITIONARY, AND IMAGINATIVE.

WITH A GLOSSARY.

REVISED BY ALEXANDER LEIGHTON,

ONE OF THE ORIGINAL EDITORS AND CONTRIBUTORS.

NEW EDITION.

VOL. III.

MANCHESTER:
JAMES AINSWORTH, 93, PICCADILLY.
WARD AND LOCK, 158, FLEET-STREET, LONDON.
W. P. NIMMO, 2, ST. DAVID-STREET, EDINBURGH; AND 6, ADAMS COURT LANE, GLASGOW.

64152

PR
5339
W69t
v.5

CONTENTS.

WIDOW OF DUNSKAITH,.....*(Hugh Miller)*, 1
THE WHITSOME TRAGEDY,.....*(John Mackay Wilson)*, 20
THE SURGEON'S TALES,.....*(Alexander Leighton)*—
THE DIVER AND THE BELL,..... 53
AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WILLIE SMITH,.....*(Alexander Campbell)*, 85
THE PROFESSOR'S TALES,.....*(Professor Thomas Gillespie)*—
PHEEBE FORTUNE,..... 117
THE ROYAL BRIDAL,.....*(John Mackay Wilson)*, 134
THE ROYAL RAID,.....*(Alexander Leighton)*, 166
THE EXPERIMENTER,.....*(John Howell)*, 198
THE YOUNG LAIRD,.....*(Alexander Bethune)*, 230
THE RIVAL NIGHTCAPS,.....*(Alexander Campbell)*, 263

WILSON'S

TALES OF THE BORDERS,

AND OF SCOTLAND.

THE WIDOW OF DUNSKAITH.

"Oh, mony a shriek, that waefu' night,
Rose frae the stormy main;
An' mony a bootless vow was made,
An' mony a prayer vain;
An' mithers wept, an' widows mourned,
For mony a weary day;
An' maidens, ance o' blithest mood,
Grew sad, and pined away."

THE northern Sutor of Cromarty is of a bolder character than even the southern one—abrupt, and stern, and precipitous as that is. It presents a loftier and more unbroken wall of rock; and, where it bounds on the Moray Frith, there is a savage magnificence in its cliffs and caves, and in the wild solitude of its beach, which we find nowhere equalled on the shores of the other. It is more exposed, too, in the time of tempest: the waves often rise, during the storms of winter, more than a hundred feet against its precipices, festooning them, even at that height, with wreaths of kelp and tangle; and, for miles within the bay, we may hear, at such seasons, the savage uproar that maddens amid its cliffs and caverns, coming booming over the lashings of the nearer waves, like the roar of artillery. There is a sublimity of desolation on its shores, the effects of a conflict maintained for ages, and on a scale so gigantic. The isolated, spire-like crags that rise along its base, are so

drilled and bored by the incessant lashings of the surf, and are ground down into shapes so fantastic, that they seem but the wasted skeletons of their former selves; and we find almost every natural fissure in the solid rock hollowed into an immense cavern, whose very ceiling, though the head turns as we look up to it, owes evidently its comparative smoothness to the action of the waves. One of the most remarkable of these recesses occupies what we may term the apex of a lofty promontory. The entrance, unlike that of most of the others, is narrow and rugged, though of great height; but it widens within into a shadowy chamber, perplexed, like the nave of a cathedral, by uncertain cross lights, that come glimmering into it through two lesser openings, which perforate the opposite sides of the promontory. It is a strange, ghostly-looking place: there is a sort of moonlight greenness in the twilight which forms its noon, and the denser shadows which rest along its sides; a blackness, so profound that it mocks the eye, hangs over a lofty passage which leads from it, like a corridor, still deeper into the bowels of the hill; the light falls on a sprinkling of half-buried bones, the remains of animals that, in the depth of winter, have creeped into it for shelter, and to die; and, when the winds are up, and the hoarse roar of the waves comes reverberated from its inner recesses, or creeps howling along its roof, it needs no over-active fancy to people its avenues with the shapes of beings long since departed from every gayer and softer scene, but which still rise uncalled to the imagination in those by-corners of nature which seem dedicated, like this cavern, to the wild, the desolate, and the solitary.

There is a little rocky bay a few hundred yards to the west, which has been known for ages, to all the seafaring men of the place, as the Cova Green. It is such a place as we are sometimes made acquainted with in the narratives of disastrous shipwrecks. First, there is a broad semicir-

cular strip of beach, with a wilderness of insulated piles of rock in front; and so steep and continuous is the wall of precipices which rises behind, that, though we may see directly over head the grassy slopes of the hill, with here and there a few straggling firs, no human foot ever gained the nearer edge. The bay of the Cova Green is a prison to which the sea presents the only outlet; and the numerous caves which open along its sides, like the arches of an amphitheatre, seem but its darker cells. It is, in truth, a wild impressive place, full of beauty and terror, and with none of the squalidness of the mere dungeon about it. There is a puny littleness in our brick and lime receptacles of misery and languor which speaks as audibly of the feebleness of man, as of his crimes or his inhumanity; but here all is great and magnificent—and there is much, too, that is pleasing. Many of the higher cliffs, which rise beyond the influence of the spray, are tapestried with ivy; we may see the heron watching on the ledges beside her bundle of withered twigs, or the blue hawk darting from her cell; there is life on every side of us—life in even the wild tumbling of the waves, and in the stream of pure water which, rushing from the higher edge of the precipice in a long white cord, gradually untwists itself by the way, and spatters ceaselessly among the stones over the entrance of one of the caves. Nor does the scene want its old story to strengthen its hold on the imagination.

I am wretchedly uncertain in my dates, but it must have been some time late in the reign of Queen Anne, that a fishing yawl, after vainly labouring for hours to enter the bay of Cromarty, during a strong gale from the west, was forced, at nightfall, to relinquish the attempt, and take shelter in the Cova Green. The crew consisted of but two persons—an old fisherman and his son. Both had been throroughly drenched by the spray, and chilled by the piercing wind, which, accompanied by thick snow showers,

had blown all day through the opening, from off the snowy top of Ben Wyvis; and it was with no ordinary satisfaction that, as they opened the little bay on their last tack, they saw the red gleam of a fire flickering from one of the caves, and a boat drawn upon the beach.

"It must be some of the Tarbet fishermen," said the old man, "wind-bound like ourselves; but wiser than us, in having made provision for it. I shall feel willing enough to share their fire with them for the night."

"But see," remarked the younger, "that there be no unwillingness on the other side. I am much mistaken if that be not the boat of my cousins the Macinlas, who would so fain have broken my head last Rhorichie Tryst. But, hap what may, father, the night is getting worse, and we have no choice of quarters. Hard up your helm, or we shall barely clear the Skerries; there now, every nail an anchor." He leaped ashore, carrying with him the small hawser attached to the stern, which he wound securely round a jutting crag, and then stood for a few seconds until the old man, who moved but heavily along the thwarts, had come up to him. All was comparatively calm under the lee of the precipices; but the wind was roaring fearfully in the woods above, and whistling amid the furze and ivy of the higher cliff; and the two boatmen, as they entered the cave, could see the flakes of a thick snow shower, that had just begun to descend, circling round and round in the eddy.

The place was occupied by three men, who were sitting beside the fire, on blocks of stone which had been rolled from the beach. Two of them were young, and comparatively commonplace-looking persons; the third was a grey-headed old man, apparently of great muscular strength, though long past his prime, and of a peculiarly sinister cast of countenance. A keg of spirits, which was placed end up in front of them, served as a table; there were little drinking measures of tin on it, and the mask-like,

stolid expressions of the two younger men showed that they had been indulging freely. The elder was apparently sober. They all started to their feet on the entrance of the fishermen, and one of the younger, laying hold of the little cask, pitched it hurriedly into a dark corner of the cave."

"His peace be here!" was the simple greeting of the elder fisherman, as he came forward. "Eachen Macinla," he continued, addressing the old man, "we have not met for years before—not, I believe, since the death o' my puir sister, when we parted such ill friends; but we are short-lived creatures ourselves, Eachen—surely our anger should be short-lived too; and I have come to crave from you a seat by your fire."

"William Beth," replied Eachen, "it was no wish of mine we should ever meet; but to a seat by the fire you are welcome."

Old Macinla and his sons resumed their seats, the two fishermen took their places fronting them, and for some time neither party exchanged a word.

A fire, composed mostly of fragments of wreck and drift-wood, threw up its broad cheerful flame towards the roof; but so spacious was the cavern that, except where here and there a whiter mass of stalactites, or bolder projection of cliff stood out from the darkness, the light seemed lost in it. A dense body of smoke, which stretched its blue level surface from side to side, and concealed the roof, went rolling outwards like an inverted river.

"This is but a gousty lodging-place," remarked the old fisherman, as he looked round him; "but I have seen a worse. I wish the folk at home kent we were half sae snug; and then the fire, too—I have always felt something companionable in a fire, something consolable, as it were; it appears, somehow, as if it were a creature like ourselves, and had life in it." The remark seemed directed to no one in particular, and there was no reply. In a second

attempt at conversation, the fisherman addressed himself to the old man.

"It has vexed me," he said, "that our young folk shouldna, for my sister's sake, be on more friendly terms, Eachen. They hae been quarrelling, an' I wish to see the quarrel made up." The old man, without deigning a reply, knit his grey shaggy brows, and looked doggedly at the fire.

"Nay, now," continued the fisherman, "we are getting auld men, Eachen, an' wauld better bury our hard thoughts o' ane anither afore we come to be buried ourselves. What if we were sent to the Cova Green the night, just that we might part friends!"

Eachen fixed his keen scrutinizing glance on the speaker —it was but for a moment; there was a tremulous motion of the under lip as he withdrew it, and a setting of the teeth—the expression of mingled hatred and anger; but the tone of his reply savoured more of sullen indifference than of passion.

"William Beth," he said, "ye hae tricked my boys out o' the bit property that suld hae come to them by their mother; it's no lang since they barely escaped being murdered by your son. What more want you? But ye perhaps think it better that the time should be passed in making hollow lip professions o' good will, than that it suld be employed in clearing off an old score."

"Ay," hiccuped out the elder of the two sons, "the houses might come my way, then; an', besides, gin Helen Henry were to lose her ae joe, the ither might hae a better chance. Rise, brither—rise, man, an' fight for me an' your sweetheart." The younger lad, who seemed verging towards the last stage of intoxication, struck his clenched fist against his palm, and attempted to rise.

"Look ye, uncle," exclaimed the younger fisherman, a powerful-looking and very handsome stripling, as he sprang

to his feet, "your threat might be spared. Our little property was my grandfather's, and naturally descended to his only son; and, as for the affair at Rhorichie, I dare either of my cousins to say the quarrel was of my seeking. I have no wish to raise my hand against the sons or the husband of my aunt; but, if forced to it, you will find that neither my father nor myself are wholly at your mercy."

"Whisht, Earnest," said the old fisherman, laying his hand on the hand of the young man; "sit down—your uncle maun hae ither thoughts. It is now fifteen years, Eachen," he continued, "since I was called to my sister's deathbed. You yourself canna forget what passed there. There had been grief, an' cauld, an' hunger, beside that bed. I'll no say you were willingly unkind—few folk are that but when they hae some purpose to serve by it, an' you could have none; but you laid no restraint on a harsh temper, and none on a craving habit that forgets everything but itsel; and so my puir sister perished in the middle o' her days—a wasted, heart-broken thing. It's no that I wish to hurt you. I mind how we passed our youth thegither, among the wild Buccaneers; it was a bad school, Eachen; an' I owre often feel I havena unlearned a' my ain lessons, to wonder that you shouldna hae unlearned a' yours. But we're getting old men, Eachen, an' we have now what we hadna in our young days, the advantage o' the light. Dinna let us die fools in the sight o' Him who is so willing to give us wisdom—dinna let us die enemies. We have been early friends, though maybe no for good; we have fought afore now at the same gun; we have been united by the luve o' her that's now in the dust; an' there are our boys—the nearest o' kin to ane anither that death has spared. But, what I feel as strongly as a' the rest, Eachen—we hae done meikle ill thegither. I can hardly think o' a past sin without thinking o' you, an'

thinking too, that, if a creature like me may hope he has found pardon, you shouldna despair. Eachen, we maun be friends."

The features of the stern old man relaxed. "You are perhaps right, William," he at length replied; "but ye were aye a luckier man than me—luckier for this world, I'm sure, an' maybe for the next. I had aye to seek, an' often without finding, the good that came in your gate o' itsel. Now that age is coming upon us, ye get a snug rental frae the little houses, an' I hae naething; an' ye hae character an' credit, but wha would trust me, or cares for me? Ye hae been made an elder o' the kirk, too, I hear, an' I am still a reprobate; but we were a' born to be just what we are, an' sae maun submit. An' your son, too, shares in your luck; he has heart an' hand, an' my whelps hae neither; an' the girl Henry, that scouts that sot there, likes him—but what wonder o' that? But you are right, William—we maun be friends. Pledge me." The little cask was produced; and, filling the measures, he nodded to Earnest and his father. They pledged him; when, as if seized by a sudden frenzy, he filled his measure thrice in hasty succession, draining it each time to the bottom, and then flung it down with a short hoarse laugh. His sons, who would fain have joined with him, he repulsed with a firmness of manner which he had not before exhibited. "No, whelps," he said—"get sober as fast as ye can."

"We had better," whispered Earnest to his father, "not sleep in the cave to-night."

"Let me hear now o' your quarrel, Earnest," said Eachen—"your father was a more prudent man than you; and, however much he wronged me, did it without quarrelling."

"The quarrel was none of my seeking," replied Earnest. "I was insulted by your sons, and would have borne it for the sake of what they seemed to forget; but there was

another whom they also insulted, and that I could not bear."

"The girl Henry—and what then?"

"Why, my cousins may tell the rest. They were mean enough to take odds against me; and I just beat the two spiritless fellows that did so."

But why record the quarrels of this unfortunate evening? An hour or two passed away in disagreeable bickerings, during which the patience of even the old fisherman was worn out, and that of Earnest had failed him altogether. They both quitted the cave, boisterous as the night was, and it was now stormier than ever; and, heaving off their boat, till she rode at the full length of her swing from the shore, sheltered themselves under the sail. The Macinlas returned next evening to Tarbet; but, though the wind moderated during the day, the yawl of William Beth did not enter the bay of Cromarty. Weeks passed away, during which the clergyman of the place corresponded, regarding the missing fishermen, with all the lower parts of the Frith; but they had disappeared, as it seemed, for ever.

Where the northern Sutor sinks into the low sandy tract that nearly fronts the town of Cromarty, there is a narrow grassy terrace raised but a few yards over the level of the beach. It is sheltered behind by a steep undulating bank; for, though the rock here and there juts out, it is too rich in vegetation to be termed a precipice. To the east, the coast retires into a semicircular rocky recess, terminating seawards in a lofty, dark-browed precipice, and bristling, throughout all its extent, with a countless multitude of crags, that, at every heave of the wave, break the surface into a thousand eddies. Towards the west, there is a broken and somewhat dreary waste of sand. The terrace itself, however, is a sweet little spot, with its grassy slopes, that recline towards the sun, partially covered with

thickets of wild-rose and honeysuckle, and studded, in their season, with violets, and daisies, and the delicate rock geranium. Towards its eastern extremity, with the bank rising immediately behind, and an open space in front, which seemed to have been cultivated at one time as a garden, there stood a picturesque little cottage. It was that of the widow of William Beth. Five years had now elapsed since the disappearance of her son and husband, and the cottage bore the marks of neglect and decay. The door and window, bleached white by the sea winds, shook loosely to every breeze; clusters of chickweed luxuriated in the hollows of the thatch, or mantled over the eaves; and a honeysuckle that had twisted itself round the chimney, lay withering in a tangled mass at the foot of the wall. But the progress of decay was more marked in the widow herself than in her dwelling. She had had to contend with grief and penury: a grief not the less undermining in its effects, from the circumstance of its being sometimes suspended by hope—a penury so extreme that every succeeding day seemed as if won by some providential interference from absolute want. And she was now, to all appearance, fast sinking in the struggle. The autumn was well nigh over: she had been weak and ailing for months before, and had now become so feeble as to be confined for days together to her bed. But, happily, the poor solitary woman had, at least, one attached friend in the daughter of a farmer of the parish, a young and beautiful girl, who, though naturally of no melancholy temperament, seemed to derive almost all she enjoyed of pleasure from the society of the widow. Helen Henry was in her twenty-third year; but she seemed older in spirit than in years. She was thin and pale, though exquisitely formed; there was a drooping heaviness in her fine eyes, and a cast of pensive thought on her forehead, that spoke of a longer experience of grief than so brief a portion of life might be

supposed to have furnished. She had once lovers; but they had gradually dropped away in the despair of moving her, and awed by a deep and settled pensiveness which, in the gayest season of youth, her character had suddenly but permanently assumed. Besides, they all knew her affections were already engaged, and had come to learn, though late and unwillingly, that there are cases in which no rival can be more formidable than a dead one.

Autumn, I have said, was near its close. The weather had given indications of an early and severe winter; and the widow, whose worn-out and delicate frame was affected by every change of atmosphere, had for a few days been more than usually indisposed. It was now long past noon, and she had but just risen. The apartment, however, bore witness that her young friend had paid her the accustomed morning visit; the fire was blazing on a clean comfortable-looking hearth, and every little piece of furniture it contained was arranged with the most scrupulous care. Her devotions were hardly over, when the well-known tap was again heard at the door.

"Come in, my lassie," said the widow, and then lowering her voice, as the light foot of her friend was heard on the threshold—"God," she said, "has been ever kind to me—far, very far aboon my best deservings; and, oh, may He blèss and reward her who has done so meikle, meikle for me!" The young girl entered and took her seat beside her.

"You told me, mother," she said, "that to-morrow is Earnest's birthday. I have been thinking of it all last night, and feel as if my heart were turning into stone. But when I am alone, it is always so. There is a cold death-like weight at my breast that makes me unhappy, though, when I come to you, and we speak together, the feeling passes away, and I become cheerful."

"Ah, my bairn," replied the old woman; "I fear I'm no

your friend, meikle as I love you. We speak owre, owre often o' the lost; for our foolish hearts find mair pleasure in that than in anything else; but ill does it fit us for being alone. Weel do I ken your feeling—a stone deadness o' the heart, a feeling there are no words to express, but that seems as it were insensibility itself turning into pain; an' I ken, too, my lassie, that it is nursed by the very means ye take to flee from it. Ye maun learn to think mair o' the living and less o' the dead. Little, little does it matter, how a puir worn-out creature like me passes the few broken days o' life that remains to her; but ye are young, my Helen, an' the world is a' before you; an' ye maun just try an' live for it."

"To-morrow," rejoined Helen, "is Earnest's birthday. Is it no strange that, when our minds make pictures o' the dead, it is always as they looked best, an' kindest, an' maist life-like. I have been seeing Earnest all night long, as when I saw him on his *last* birthday; an', oh, the sharpness o' the pang, when, every now an' then, the back o' the picture is turned to me, an' I see him as he is—dust!"

The widow grasped her young friend by the hand. "Helen," she said, "you will get better when I am taken from you; but, so long as we continue to meet, our thoughts will aye be running the one way. I had a strange dream last night, an' must tell it you. You see yon rock to the east, in the middle o' the little bay, that now rises through the back draught o' the sea, like the hull o' a ship, an' is now buried in a mountain o' foam. I dreamed I was sitting on that rock, in what seemed a bonny summer's morning; the sun was glancin' on the water; an' I could see the white sand far down at the bottom, wi' the reflection o' the little wavies running o'er it in long curls o' gowd. But there was no way o' leaving the rock, for the deep waters were round an' round me; an' I saw the tide covering one wee bittie after another, till at last the whole was

covered. An' yet I had but little fear; for I remembered that baith Earnest an' William were in the sea afore me; an' I had the feeling that I could hae rest nowhere but wi' them. The water at last closed o'er me, an' I sank frae aff the rock to the sand at the bottom. But death seemed to have no power given him to hurt me; an' I walked as light as ever I hae done on a gowany brae, through the green depths o' the sea. I saw the silvery glitter o' the trout an' the salmon, shining to the sun, far far aboon me, like white pigeons in the lift; an' around me there were crimson starfish, an' sea-flowers, an' long trailing plants that waved in the tide like streamers; an' at length I came to a steep rock wi' a little cave like a tomb in it. 'Here,' I said, 'is the end o' my journey—William is here, an' Earnest.' An', as I looked into the cave, I saw there were bones in it, an' I prepared to take my place beside them. But, as I stooped to enter, some one called me, an' on looking up, there was William. 'Lillias,' he said, 'it is not night yet, nor is that your bed; you are to sleep, not with me, but with Earnest—haste you home, for he is waiting you.' 'Oh, take me to him! I said; an' then all at once I found myself on the shore, dizzied an' blinded wi' the bright sunshine; for, at the cave, there was a darkness like that o' a simmer's gloamin; an', when I looked up for William, it was Earnest that stood before me, life-like an' handsome as ever; an' you were beside him.'"

The day had been gloomy and lowering, and, though there was little wind, a tremendous sea, that, as the evening advanced, rose higher and higher against the neighbouring precipice, had been rolling ashore since morning. The wind now began to blow in long hollow gusts among the cliffs, and the rain to patter against the widow's casement.

"It will be a storm from the sea," she said; "the scarts an' gulls hae been flying landward sin' daybreak, an' I hae

never seen the ground swell come home heavier against the rocks. Wae's me for the puir sailors!"

"In the lang stormy nights," said Helen, "I canna sleep for thinking o' them, though I have no one to bind me to them now. Only look how the sea rages among the rocks, as if it were a thing o' life an' passion!—that last wave rose to the crane's nest. An', look, yonder is a boat rounding the rock wi' only one man in it. It dances on the surf as if it were a cork, an' the wee bittie o' sail, sae black an' weet, seems scarcely bigger than a napkin. Is it no bearing in for the boat haven below?"

"My poor old eyes," replied the widow, "are growing dim, an' surely no wonder; but yet I think I should ken that boatman. Is it no Eachen Macinla o' Tarbet?"

"Hard-hearted, cruel old man," exclaimed the maiden, "what can be taking him here? Look how his skiff shoots in like an arrow on the long roll o' the surf!—an' now she is high on the beach. How unfeeling it was o' him to rob you o' your little property in the very first o' your grief! But, see, he is so worn out that he can hardly walk over the rough stones. Ah, me, he is down! wretched old man I must run to his assistance—but no, he has risen again. See he is coming straight to the house; an' now he is at the door." In a moment after, Eachen entered the cottage.

"I am perishing, Lillias," he said, "with cold an' hunger, an' can gang nae farther; surely ye'll no shut your door on me in a night like this."

The poor widow had been taught in a far different school. She relinquished to the worn-out fisherman her seat by the fire, now hurriedly heaped with fresh fuel, and hastened to set before him the simple viands which her cottage afforded.

As the night darkened, the storm increased. The wind roared among the rocks like the rattling of a thousand carriages over a paved street; and there were times when,

after a sudden pause, the blast struck the cottage, as if it were a huge missile flung against it, and pressed on its roof and walls till the very floor rocked, and the rafters strained and shivered like the beams of a stranded vessel. There was a ceaseless patter of mingled rain and snow—now lower, now louder; and the fearful thunderings of the waves, as they raged among the pointed crags, was mingled with the hoarse roll of the storm along the beach. The old man sat beside the fire, fronting the widow and her companion, with his head reclined nearly as low as his knee, and his hands covering his face. There was no attempt at conversation. He seemed to shudder every time the blast yelled along the roof; and, as a fiercer gust burst open the door, there was a half-muttered ejaculation.

"Heaven itsel hae mercy on them! for what can man do in a night like this?"

"It is black as pitch," exclaimed Helen, who had risen to draw the bolt; "an' the drift flies sae thick that it feels to the hand like a solid snaw wreath. An', oh, how it lightens?"

"Heaven itsel hae mercy on them!" again ejaculated the old man. "My two boys," said he, addressing the widow, "are at the far Frith; an' how can an open boat live in a night like this?"

There seemed something magical in the communication —something that awakened all the sympathies of the poor bereaved woman; and she felt she could forgive him every unkindness.

"Wae's me!" she exclaimed, "it was in such a night as this, an' scarcely sae wild, that my Earnest perished."

The old man groaned and wrung his hands.

In one of the pauses of the hurricane, there was a gun heard from the sea, and shortly after a second. "Some puir vessel in distress," said the widow; but, alas! where can succour come frae in sae terrible a night? There is

help only in Ane. Wae's me! would we no better light up a blaze on the floor, an', dearest Helen, draw off the cover frae the window. My puir Earnest has told me that my light has aften shewed him his bearing frae the deadly bed o' Dunskaith. That last gun"—for a third was now heard booming over the mingled roar of the sea and the wind—"that last gun came frae the very rock edge. Wae's me, wae's me! maun they perish, an' sae near!" Helen hastily lighted a bundle of more fir, that threw up its red, sputtering blaze half-way to the roof, and, dropping the covering, continued to wave it opposite the window. Guns were still heard at measured intervals, but apparently from a safer offing; and the last, as it sounded faintly against the wind, came evidently from the interior of the bay.

"She has escaped," said the old man; "it's a feeble hand that canna do good when the heart is willing—but what has mine been doing a' life long?" He looked at the widow and shuddered.

Towards morning, the wind fell, and the moon, in her last quarter, rose red and glaring out of the Frith, lighting the melancholy roll of the waves, that still came like mountains, and the broad white belt of surf that skirted the shores. The old fisherman left the cottage, and sauntered along the beach. It was heaped with huge wreaths of kelp and tangle uprooted by the storm, and in the hollow of the rocky bay lay the scattered fragments of a boat. Eachen stooped to pick up a piece of the wreck, in the fearful expectation of finding some known mark by which to recognise it, when the light fell full on the swollen face of a corpse that seemed staring at him from out a wreath of weed. It was that of his eldest son. The body of the younger, fearfully gashed and mangled by the rocks, lay a few yards farther to the east.

The morning was as pleasant as the night had been boisterous; and, except that the distant hills were covered

with snow, and that a heavy swell still continued to roll in from the sea, there remained scarce any trace of the recent tempest. Every hollow of the neighbouring hill had its little runnel, formed by the rains of the previous night, that now splashed and glistened to the sun. The bushes round the cottage were well nigh divested of their leaves; but their red berries—hips and haws, and the juicy fruit of the honeysuckle—gleamed cheerfully to the light; and a warm steam of vapour, like that of a May morning, rose from the roof and the little mossy platform in front. But the scene seemed to have something more than merely its beauty to recommend it to a young man, drawn apparently to the spot, with many others, by the fate of the two unfortunate fishermen, and who now stood gazing on the rocks, and the hills, and the cottage, as a lover on the features of his mistress. The bodies had been carried to an old storehouse, which may still be seen a short mile to the west; and the crowds that, during the early part of the morning, had been perambulating the beach, gazing at the wreck, and discussing the various probabilities of the accident, had gradually dispersed. But this solitary individual, whom no one knew, remained behind. He was a tall and swarthy, though very handsome man, of about five-and-twenty, with a slight scar on his left cheek; his dress, which was plain and neat, was distinguished from that of the common seaman by three narrow stripes of gold lace on the upper part of one of the sleeves. He had twice stepped towards the cottage door, and twice drawn back, as if influenced by some unaccountable feeling—timidity, perhaps, or bashfulness; and yet the bearing of the man gave little indication of either. But, at length, as if he had gathered heart, he raised the latch and went in.

The widow, who had had many visitors that morning, seemed to be scarcely aware of his entrance; she was sitting on a low seat beside the fire, her face covered with

her hands, while the tremulous rocking motion of her body showed that she was still brooding over the distresses of the previous night. Her companion, who had thrown herself across the bed, was fast asleep. The stranger seated himself beside the fire, which seemed dying amid its ashes, and, turning sedulously from the light of the window, laid his hand gently on the widow's shoulder. She started, and looked up.

"I have strange news for you," he said. "You have long mourned for your husband and your son; but, though the old man has been dead for years, your son, Earnest, is still alive, and is now in the harbour of Cromarty. He is lieutenant of the vessel whose guns you must have heard during the night."

The poor woman seemed to have lost all power of reply.

"I am a friend of Earnest's," continued the stranger; "and have come to prepare you for meeting with him. It is now five years since his father and he were blown off to sea by a strong gale from the land. They drove before it for four days, when they were picked up by an armed vessel then cruising in the North Sea, and which soon after sailed for the coast of Spanish America. The poor old man sank under the fatigues he had undergone; though Earnest, better able from his youth to endure hardship, was little affected by them. He accompanied us on our Spanish expedition—indeed, he had no choice, for we touched at no British port after meeting with him; and, through good fortune, and what his companions call merit, he has risen to be the second man aboard; and has now brought home with him gold enough, from the Spaniards, to make his old mother comfortable. He saw your light yesterevening, and steered by it to the road-stead, blessing you all the way. Tell me, for he anxiously wished me to inquire of you, whether Helen Henry is yet unmarried."

"It is Earnest—it is Earnest himself!" exclaimed the maiden, as she started from the widow's bed. In a moment after she was locked in his arms. But why dwell on a scene which I feel myself unfitted to describe?

It was ill, before evening, with old Eachen Macinla. The fatigues of the previous day, the grief and horror of the following night, had prostrated his energies, bodily and mental, and he now lay tossing, in a waste apartment of the storehouse, in the delirium of a fever. The bodies of his two sons occupied the floor below. He muttered, unceasingly, in his ravings, of William and Earnest Beth. They were standing beside him, he said, and every time he attempted to pray for his poor boys and himself, the stern old man laid his cold swollen hand on his lips.

"Why trouble me?" he exclaimed. "Why stare with your white dead eyes on me? Away, old man! the little black shells are sticking in your gray hairs; away to your place! Was it I who raised the wind on the sea?—was it I?—was it I? Uh, u!—no—no, you were asleep—you were fast asleep, and could not see me cut the swing; and, besides, it was only a piece of rope. Keep away—touch me not; I am a free man, and will plead for my life. Please your honour, I did not murder these two men; I only cut the rope that fastened their boat to the land. Ha! ha! ha! he has ordered them away, and they have both left me unskaithed." At this moment Earnest Beth entered the apartment, and approached the bed. The miserable old man raised himself on his elbow, and, regarding him with a horrid stare, shrieked out—"Here is Earnest Beth come for me a second time!" and, sinking back on the pillow, instantly expired.

THE WHITSOME TRAGEDY.

When our forefathers were compelled to give up the ancient practice of crossing the Borders, and of seizing and driving home whatever cattle they could lay their hands upon, without caring or inquiring who might be their owner—in order to supply their necessities, both as regarded providing themselves with cattle and with articles of wearing apparel, they were forced to become buyers or sellers at the annual and other fairs on both sides of the Border. Hence they had, as we still have, the fairs of Stagshawbank, Whitsunbank, St. Ninian's, St. James's, and St. Boswell's; with the fairs of Wooler, Dunse, Chirnside, Swinton, and of many other towns and villages. Of the latter, several fell into disuse; and that of Whitsome was discontinued. Whitsome, or White's home, is the name of a village and small agricultural parish in the Merse, which is bounded by the parishes of Swinton, Ladykirk, Edrom, and Hutton. Now, as has been stated, Whitsome, in common with many other villages, enjoyed the privilege of having held at it an annual fair. But, though the old practice of lifting cattle, and of every man taking what he could, had been suppressed, the laws were not able to extinguish the ancient Border spirit which produced such doings; and, at the annual fairs, it often broke forth in riot, and terminated in blood. It was in consequence of one of those scenes, and in order to suppress them, that the people of Whitsome were deprived of a fair being held there; the particulars whereof, in the following story, will be unfolded.

About the middle of the seventeenth century, there

resided on the banks of the Till, and a few miles above its junction with the Tweed, a widow of the name of Barbara Moor. She had had seven sons; but they and her husband had all fallen in the troubles of the period, and she was left bereaved, desolate, and without a comforter. Many said that affliction had turned her brain; but even before she was acquainted with days of sorrow or with nights of lamentation, there was often a burning wildness in her words, and her manners were not as those of other women. There was a tinge of extravagance, and a character of vehemence, in all her actions. Some of her neighbours sympathised with her, because of the affliction that rendered her hearth desolate; but the greater part beheld her with reverential respect, or looked upon her with fear and trembling, believing her to be leagued with the inhabitants of the invisible world, and familiar with the moon and stars, reading in their courses the destinies of nations and of individuals as in a book. The character of a being who could read the decrees of fate, and even in some instances control the purposes of men, was certainly that which she seemed most pleased to assume; and its wildness soothed her troubled thoughts, or directed them into other channels.

In her youth, and before her father had been compelled to bow his head to the authority of the wardens of the marches, she had resided in a castellated building, of greater strength than magnitude, one of the minor strongholds on the Border, and which might have been termed towers for the protection of stolen cattle. But, when the two nations came beneath the sovereignty of one monarch, and the spear of war was transformed into a pruning-hook, there went forth a decree that the strongholds, great and small, along the Borders should be destroyed; and amongst those that were rendered defenceless and uninhabitable was the turret which, for many generations,

had been occupied by the ancestors of Barbara Moor. During the life-time of her husband, she had resided in a comfortable-looking farm-house, the appearance of which indicated that its inhabitants were of a more peaceful character than were those who, a few years before, had occupied the prison-like houses of strength. She now resided in a small mud-built and turf-covered hovel, which in winter afforded but a sorry shelter from the "pelting of the pitiless storm."

But Barbara was used to bear the scorching sun of summer and the cold and storms of winter. She walked in the midst of the tempest, and bowed not her head; and she held converse with the wild lightning and the fierce hail, speaking of them as the ministers of her will. For nearly nine months every year she was absent from her clay-built hovel, and none knew whither she wandered.

It is necessary, however, for the development of our story, that we here make further mention of her husband and her sons. The elder Moor had been a daring free-booter in his youth; and often in the morning, and even at dead of night, the "fray of support," the cry for help, and the sudden summons for neighbours and kinsmen to rise and ride, were raised wheresoever he trode; and the sleuth-hounds were let loose upon his track. It was his boast that he dared to ride farther to humble an enemy than any other reiver on either side of the Border. If he saw, or if he heard, of a herd of cattle or a flock of sheep to his liking, he immediately "marked it for his own," and seldom failed in securing it; and though the property so obtained was not purchased with money, it was often procured with a part of his own blood—and with the blood, and not unfrequently the lives, of his friends, followers, and relatives. And when law and justice became stronger than the reiver's right, they by no means tamed

his spirit. Though necessity, then, compelled him to be a buyer and seller of cattle, he looked upon the occupation and the necessity as a disgrace, and he sighed for the honoured and happier days of his youth, when the freebooter's might was the freebooter's right. His sons were young men deeply imbued with his spirit; and it was their chiefest pleasure, during the long winter evenings, to sit and listen to him, while he recorded the exploits and the hairbreadth escapes of his early days. He frequently related to them strange adventures and contests which he had in his youth with one Walter Cunningham, who resided near Simprin, in Berwickshire, and who was not only regarded as a wealthy man, but as one of the boldest on the Borders. He had often boasted of the number of his herds, and defied the stoutest heart in Northumberland to lay hand upon their horns. The elder Moor had heard this defiance, and being resolved to prove that he had both a hand and a heart to put the defiance to the test, the following is one of the adventures which he related to his sons in connection therewith :—

"It was about the Martinmas," he said, "when the leaves were becoming few and blighted on the trees; I was courting your mother at the time, and her faither had consented to our marriage; but, at the same time, he half cast up to me, that I had but an ill-plenished house to take home a wife to—that I had neither meal in the press, kye in the byre, nor oxen in the court-yard. His own mailing was but poorly provided at the time; and had he looked at hame, he hardly would have ventured to throw a reflection at me.

"'Weel, sir, said I to him, 'I dinna deny but what you say is true; but I have supple heels, a ready hand, a good sword, and a stout heart, and I ken a canny byre where there are threescore o' sleak beasties, weel worth the harrying.'

"'Now ye speak like a lad of sense and mettle,' said the

old man; 'and on the first night that ye bring them hame, the plumpest and the fattest o' them shall be slaughtered for the marriage-feast of you and Barbara.'

"Then up spoke your mother's brother, and a winsome young man he was as ye would have found between Tweed and Tyne; and 'Jonathan,' says he to me, 'when ye gang to drive hame the herd, I shall go wi' thee, for the sake of a bout with the bold, bragging Cunningham, of Simprin—for I will lay thee my sword 'gainst a tailor's bodkin, it is him ye mean.'

"'It is him, Duncan,' said I—for your uncle's name was Duncan—'though weel do I ken that he keeps them strongly guarded, and blood will flow, and weapons be broken, before we get them into our possession. But gie me your hand, my lad—we two shall be a match for him and a' his backing. What ye take shall be your own, and what I take, your sister's; and your faither shanna cast up my toom bink and my ill-stocked mailing.'

"'Weel spoken, bairns!' cried your grandfaither, who had been a first hand at such ploys in his young days; 'weel spoken! I'm glad to see that the spirits of the young generation arena gaun backward; though, since King Jamie gaed to be King in London, as weel as at Edinburgh, our laws are only fit for a few women, and everything is done that can be done to banish manhood, and make it a crime.'

"'Go upon no such an errand,' said your mother to both of us; 'for there is blood upon baith your brows, and there is death in your path.'

"'Havers, lassie!' cried her faither angrily; 'are ye at your randering again?—what blood do ye see on their brows mair than I do, or what death can ye perceive in their path? All your mother's Highland kinsfolk were never able to throw their second-sighted glamour into my een, and my own bairn shanna do it.'

"'Call it randers, or what ye will,' answered she; 'but I see it plain as I see the grey hairs upon your head, that death and lamentation are gathering round my father's hearth, and are hovering and screaming owre it, like vultures round a desolate place.'

"Her words made my flesh to creep upon my bones; for, both before that, and a hundred times since, I have heard her say dark and strange things, which sooner or later have owre truly come to pass. However, the foray across to Simprin was delayed till after our marriage; and your mother almost persuaded me to give up all thoughts of it, and instead of my former habits of life, to cultivate the bit ground which my forefaithers had held for two hundred years, for the consideration of an armed man's service. But her brother taunted me, and said I was no better than Samson lying wi' his head on the lap of Dalilah, and that I had not only given his sister my heart to keep, but my courage also. A taunt was a thing that I never could endure, and that I never would put up wi' from any man that ever was born—and I hope none of ye ever will, or, as I am your faither! ye should be no longer my sons!

"'Weel, this night be it,' said I to your uncle, 'The Tweed will be fordable at Norham—I will have my shelty and weapons ready precisely at eleven, and get two friends to accompany us that I can trust. Do ye the like, and we shall see whose courage will stand firmest before morning.'

"We gave each other our hands upon it, and said it was a bargain, and immediately set about making preparations for the excursion. Before the appointed hour, he rode up to my door, accompanied by two of his faither's servants; and I with my two friends were in readiness waiting for him. Your mother was very bitter against our purpose, and her words and her warnings made my very heart to shake within my breast. Her eyes flashed, as if they had

been balls of fire, and her very bosom heaved up and down wi' agitation.

"'Husband!—brother!' she cried, 'listen to me, and give up the mad errand on which ye are bent; for the bloodhound is snuffing the air and gnashing its teeth, and the hooded crow clapping its wings for a feast, and the owl has looked east, west, north, and south, from the auld turret—it has screamed wi' joy, and its eyes are fixed on Simprin! Be wise—be warned—or the moon will set and the sun rise upon unburied bones. Cunningham of Simprin is strong and powerful; he is strong wi' men, he is strong wi' money; and his herds and his hirsels are strongly guarded. Again I say to ye, be wise—be warned—desist!—or auld men will tear their grey hairs, and wives mourn; and those only that live by the gibbet, rejoice wi' the bloodhound and bird of prey!'

"Her words made us both uncomfortable; but we had often been engaged in such exploits before the expedition was determined on; and we couldna, in the presence of the four men that we had engaged to accompany us, abandon it. They were fearless and experienced hands at the trade; but the new laws on the Borders had reduced them to great privations, and their teeth were watering for the flesh-pots of bygone days, no matter at what risk they were to be obtained.

"It was a delightful moonlight night—almost as bright as day; the moon's brightness put out the stars, and not aboon a dozen were visible, though there wasna half that number of clouds in the whole heavens, and they were just like white sheets, that spirits might be sleeping on in the air! We proceeded by way of Twisel to Norham, where we crossed the Tweed to Ladykirk; and as at midnight we passed by the auld kirkyard, I believe I actually put my hands to my ears, lest I should hear the howlets flapping their wings and screaming in the belfry, and

turned my face away from it in a sort of apprehension of seeing a spirit, or something waur, upon every grave; for your mother's prophecies were uppermost in my mind, in spite of all that I could say or strive to think. And I believe that your uncle's mind was troubled wi' the same sort of fears or fancies; for we were both silent the greater part of the road, and spoke very little to each other.

"However, just about one o'clock, and when the moon was beginning to edge down upon the Lammermuirs, we arrived at an enclosure, in which Cunningham had sixty head of cattle penned. The six of us had but little difficulty in breaking down the gate that opened to the enclosure; and just as we were beginning to drive out the cattle, a man started up on a sort of tower place that was built upon the wall that surrounded them, and hurled a kind of instrument round his head, that made a noise like a thousand corn-craiks crying together in concert, and trying which would craik loudest and fastest. At the unearthly sound, the cattle also commenced a louting that might easily have been heard at two or three miles off.

"It at once struck me, as the best and wisest step for us to take, that we should put spurs into our horses, and gallop back to Tweedside; for I kenned it would be impossible for us to secure a single cow, surrounded, as we were sure to be in a few minutes, by sixty or a hundred men; and though I was no coward, I was aware that there could be but little bravery in six men attempting to give battle to sixty. But, before I had time to come to a determination, or even to speak, I saw your uncle's pistol flash; and even, I may say, before I heard the report, I perceived the man tumble down headlong from the turret on the wall, among the horns of the cattle.

"'Ye have done wrong in shooting the lad,' said I; 'ye have raised the whole country side; and presently Cunningham and all his host will be at our heels.'

"'No fear,' said he; 'there is small danger of that—a dead tongue tells no tales. And Cunningham and his host, as you term them, may be at our face, but never shall they be at our heels, unless it be marching or fighting against a common enemy.'

"We began, therefore, to drive out the cattle; but scarce had we driven them from the enclosure, and turned their heads towards the Tweed, when we heard the baying of Cunningham's blood-hounds, and the shouts of his people.

"The sounds of their horses' feet became audible, and every moment they gained ground upon us. It was apparent that, if we persisted in keeping possession of the cattle, and attempting to drive them before us, within two minutes, and we would be within swords' length of each other.

"'Brother,' said I to your uncle, as I turned and perceived that the number of our pursuers could not be under thirty, and was conscious that that number would soon be doubled—'Brother,' said I, 'let us spur on our horses, and leave the cattle to cover our retreat. It is no disgrace for six men to flee before sixty.'

"'Be it so,' he said; but it was too late. The cattle, scared by the shouting of our pursuers, the howling of their blood-hounds, and the flashing of their torches (for they had lighted fir branches to pursue us, as the moon was setting), tossed their horns in the air, and ran wildly to and fro; so that the horses, in their turn, were scared to pass through them, and we were so hemmed in between thick woods, that there was no riding round them.

"The followers of Cunningham surrounded us with a wild shout, and a cry for revenge. But we drew close together—we formed ourselves into a little circle—and waiting the attack of our antagonists, we contended with them hand to hand. Ten of them lay writhing on the

earth, or had retired, wounded, from the contest; while our little band remained unwounded, unbroken. For more than a quarter of an hour, we maintained the unequal fight. But victory, on our side, was impossible, and escape all but hopeless. Your uncle was the first of our number that fell. The sword of an enemy had pierced his bosom, and I heard him shout to me, in a voice rendered dismal with agony, never to yield!—to fight to the last! as he lay bleeding on the ground.

"I was then contending, hand to hand, with Cunningham. In our rage, we had closed by the side of each other, and each grasped the other by the throat. He shortened his sword, and, with a triumphant laugh, was lunging it at my side, when, with a sudden and violent effort, I hurled him from the saddle. As he rose, he thrust his sword into the breast of the horse on which I rode, which reared, sprang forward, and fell, and I was thrown upon the ground, in the midst of enemies.

"Two of the four who accompanied us were also wounded, and disabled from continuing the fight; and the other two, upon seeing your uncle and myself upon the ground, surrendered. In my fall, my hand quitted not my sword. I sprang to my feet, and smote around me to the right and to the left, with the fury of a wild beast. My object was to cut my way through my adversaries to the woods. I at length succeeded; but not until I had been thrice wounded. I rushed forward among the trees, until the sound of my pursuers died away; but the moon had gone down, and I knew not in what direction I ran, but pressed onward and onward, until exhausted, through loss of blood, I fell upon the ground. A sleep that was nae sleep came owre me, and a dream that was nae dream stealed owre my senses; while the blood continued oozing from my wounds, and my soul was creeping away. Something was growing owre my faculties, just like the opening of a starry night, as the

gloaming dies away, and star after star peeps out. I at first felt happy; just steeped, as it were, in a sensation of pleasantness; and there were sounds like sweet music in my ears. But the feeling of happiness was changed, I kenned not how, for one of pain—the feeling of pleasantness for one of horror—and the sweet sounds into dismal howls. I started up—I grasped my sword firmer in my hand; but the howls departed not wi' the disturbed sleep from which I had been startled; but they broke upon my ear, louder and nearer—the howls of the savage sleuth-hound, that had been sent to track me. I heard the horrid beast snuff the air, and break into short, hurried, and savage howls of delight, within a few yards of me. I had not strength to fly; and if I had had strength, flight would have been impossible. My pursuers seemed to have lost trace of the animal; for I could neither hear their footsteps nor the sound of their voices. I made no attempt at flight, but stood waiting its approach, with my sword uplifted to smite it. Loss of blood had brought a dimness over my eyes, which, added to the darkness of the wood, made me that I had rather to grope and listen for the animal, than perceive it, as it might attempt to spring upon me. I would rather have met ten enemies than, in darkness, and in my then fainting state, have waited the attack of that savage beast. It sprang upon me—I struck towards it with my sword, and wounded it; but the weapon came in contact with the tangled branches of the underwood, and the force of the blow was broken. In another moment and I felt the paws of the monster upon my breast. I grasped it by the throat, and we fell upon the ground together—my enemy uppermost. Its teeth were in my shoulder. After several vain attempts, I drove my sword through its body. The howls of the fierce beast were terrible. It withdrew its teeth from my shoulder, and struggled to escape; but I still held it by the throat—with the gripe of

death I held it—and still, still strove to pierce it again and again. I held it till it was stiff, cold, and dead!

"Wounded, faint, and weary as I was, I ventured from the woods before morning broke, and crossed the Tweed at Kersfield. The sun rose at the very moment that I turned the corner of the hill which conceals our house from the public road, and revealed to me your mother, sitting on the blue stone at the door, as cold and frozen-like to appearance as if she had sat there the livelong night (as I afterwards understood she had.) Her hands were clasped together, her eyes were raised upward, and her lips were moving, as if she were repeating a prayer, or muttering a charm. When she saw me approaching the door, she rose from the stone, and, striking her hand upon her brow, cried—'Jonathan Moor! ye cruel man! ye disregarder of the warnings of her whose life is as the shadow of your life! said I not that the hound was howling, and the raven was flapping its wings for a feast?—yet ye would not listen to my voice! And my brother!—where is my brother?—the son of my mother—more headstrong and foolish than yoursel'! Ye daurna answer, and ye needna answer. He is dead! The horse of Cunningham have trampled on his body, and he lies unburied.'

"I didna ken how to find words to speak to her, and, indeed, I was hardly able to speak; for the pain and stiffness of my wounds were terrible to endure, and there was a sickness about my heart that made me that I could have been willing to have lain down and died; and even welcomed death, as a weary man would welcome sleep.

"I was almost recovered from my wounds before we were exactly certain as to your uncle's fate; and that was when three out of the four that had accompanied us were permitted by Cunningham to return home, the other having died of his wounds a few days after the unlucky foray. From their account, it appeared that the person shot by

your uncle, while watching the cattle against the inroads of an enemy, was none other than the only brother of Cunningham. He was not aware of his brother's death until after the affray, when he was found lying in the enclosure, into which the cattle were again driven. He was offering a free pardon to all his prisoners, save him by whose hand his brother fell, upon condition that they would betray him, when your uncle, starting up from the uncouth litter of branches, rudely torn from the trees, and upon which he was carried, cried out—'I did it!—my hand brought him down from his watch-box, like a crow from its roost!'

"'To the turret wi' him!' exclaimed Cunningham wildly; 'and fling him from its pinnacle to the yard below.'

"The fierce command was fiercely and willingly obeyed. Your uncle was borne to the top of the tower over the wall, and hurled headlong to the ground; and he lay there, with the cattle trampling upon him, and the dogs licking his sores, until he was dead.

"Your mother heard the tidings in silence; but, from that day until this, she has never been as she used to be. Her anger is awful in a woman; and she vows and says the day will come when she will have revenge upon the name of Cunningham. She has spoken little of her gift of second-sight since ye were born; but she is often subject to long and gloomy fits of silent melancholy, as ye have all been witnesses; and I attribute it all to our foray to Simprin. But" (the old man would add in conclusion), "would that the good old times were come back again, when I could meet Cunningham in the field; and he should find the hand that unhorsed him five and twenty years syne has lost but little of its strength."

Now, the eldest sons of Jonathan and Barbara Moor were twins, and the youngest were also twins, and they had no

daughters living. The two eldest were seven and twenty, and the two youngest seventeen, when the civil war between the King and the Parliament took place. Walter Cunningham and three sons, with several of his dependants, joined the royal army, and he had but another son, who was then but an infant of a few months old, and whose mother had died ere his infant lips drew from her breast the nourishment of life. That infant he regarded as the Benjamin of his age, and loved him with a double love for his mother's sake. But, deeming that his duty to his King called him to arms, he, with his three eldest sons and followers, took the field, leaving the infant in the charge of a tried nurse.

Now, when Jonathan Moor heard that his old enemy had joined the King's standard, although he was too much of an ancient Borderer to care aught for either one party or another, or for any cause save his own hand; yet, to know that Cunningham had joined the King's party, was enough to induce him to join the army of the Parliament. He knew nothing about the quarrel—and he cared nothing; neither did he understand anything of the religious disputes of the period; for, generally speaking, religion upon the Borders in those days was at a very low ebb. In Berwick, and other places, John Knox, the dauntless apostle of the north, with others of his followers, had laboured some years before; but their success was not great; the Borderers could not be made to understand why they should not "take who had the power," even though kings and wardens issued laws, and clergymen denounced judgments against the practice. It was of no use to tell them "Thou shalt not steal;" the difficulty was to convince them what was theft. It was, therefore, merely because his former adversary and his sons were in the King's army, that Jonathan Moor, with his sons, joined the army of the Parliament.

Barbara protested bitterly against the departure of her husband and her sons to take part in the wars. "Wherefore, Jonathan," she cried, "wherefore will ye sacrifice yourself, and why will ye gie up my winsome sons to the jaws of death? Is there not enough provided for the eagles' and the ravens' banquet, without their bonny blue een to peck at? Bide at hame, and, with my bairns, plough up the green fields, that the earth may provide us with food, as a fond mother, from its bosom. But go ye to the wars, and your destiny is written—your doom is sealed. The blackness of lonely midnight hangs owre me as my widow's hood, and, like Rachel, I shall be left to weep for my children, for they will not be! Turn again, my husband, and my sons lay down your weapons of war. Hearken unto my voice, and remember that ye never knew one of my words fall to the ground. If ye go now, ye rush upon the swords that are sharpened for your destruction, and ye hasten to fatten the raven and the worm; for the winds shall sing your dirge, as your bonny yellow hair waves to the blast, and the gloaming and the night fling a shroud owre your uncoffined limbs. Ye go, but ye winna return. Ye will see the sun rise, but not set—and these are hard words for a mother to say."

But her husband and her sons were men of war. They loved its tumult and its strife, as a hound loveth the sound that calls it to the chase, or a war-horse the echoes of the bugle; and, though they at times trembled at her wild words, they regarded them not. Taking their route by way of Coldstream, Greenlaw, and Soutra Hill, in order to avoid the army of General Leslie, which then occupied the eastern part of Lammermuir, they descended towards Dunbar, where they enrolled themselves as volunteers in the army of Cromwell. A few days after their arrival, they joined a skirmishing party, and, in a wild glen, near to Spot, they encountered a similar company that had

been sent out by General Leslie. In the latter party, were Walter Cunningham and his three sons, and he, indeed, was their commander.

It was with a look of ruthless delight that Jonathan Moor descried his old enemy at the head of the opposite party; and he said unto his sons—"Yonder is the murderer of your uncle—Cunningham of Simprin, with his three young birkies brawly mounted, and riding sprucely at his back. But, before night, the braw plumes in their beavers shall be trampled on the earth, and the horse will be lame that carries one of them back. Stick ye by my side, and ride ye where I ride; for it will be music to your mother's soul to ken that her brother's death is avenged, and by the hands of her own flesh and blood."

The two parties rode forward and met each other. The Cunninghams and the Moors were face to face. The two fathers sat as if fixed upon their saddles for a few seconds, eyeing each other with looks of deadly hatred and ferocity, and recalling the days and the strife of other years.

Though neither party mustered fifty, the onset was fierce and furious—the struggle long and desperate; and, on each side, more than half their original number lay dead or wounded on the ground. Amongst the former were the seven sons of Jonathan Moor, and the three sons of Walter Cunningham. The old men maintained a desperate combat with each other, apart from the rest, until breathless and exhausted, both for a few minutes paused, each holding the point of his sword towards the other's breast; and they now looked once more in each other's face, and again upon the ground, where they beheld the dead bodies of their sons. Grief seemed to seek expression in redoubled rage —again their swords clashed against each other, and gleamed in the sunbeams, rapid as the fitful lightning. After a long and sore contention, in which both had given and received wounds, they fell upon the ground together;

but Moor received his death-wound on the ground, and he fell to rise no more.

"I die!" he gasped, still grasping his antagonist by the breast—"I die, Cunningham—with my children, whom I have led to death, I die! But, remember, there is one left to avenge our deaths, and she will avenge them seven-fold!"

Thus saying, his head fell back upon the ground, and he spoke not again. Cunningham, disengaging himself from the dead man's grasp, went towards the bodies of his children, and throwing himself upon the earth by their side, he kissed their lifeless eyeballs, and mourned over them. His grief was too intense, and his wounds too severe, to permit him continuing with the army, and he returned to his estate near Simprin, to watch over and protect his infant and only surviving son.

When the tidings were brought to Barbara Moor, that she, in one day, had been bereaved of her husband and seven sons, and that the former had fallen by the hand of Cunningham, the destroyer of her brother, she sat and listened to the bearer of the evil tidings as one deprived of the power of speech and motion. Her cheeks, her eyes, manifested no change; but she sat calm, fixed, and entranced in the apathy of death. Her hands remained folded upon her bosom, and her head moved not. The messenger stood wondering and horror-struck, and twice he repeated his melancholy tale; but the listener took no outward note either of his words or his presence, and he departed, marvelling at the silent sorrow of the widow.

"I knew it, man," she exclaimed, starting from her death-like trance after the messenger had departed—"I knew they would not return to me. I told them, but they believed me not—they would not hearken to my words. Miserable, deserted being that I am! wherefore should I live to mourn with the winter winds, or make a companion of the fearsome echoes that howl in the dark glens? Has

not my husband, and have not my seven winsome sons, than whom there were not in Northumberland seven comelier lads—not to say brothers—oh, have not they, in one day, been snatched away, and swallowed up from me, as a jewel that is flung into the deep sea! But I will live to be avenged of their deaths, and my brother's death; and their destroyer shall not dandle a bairn upon his knee, or kiss its cheek, while mine are *all, all* dead, and in a strange grave, and even wi' no one near to pull up the noxious nettle that may be waving ower their once bonny and snow-white bosoms!"

Thus raved the wretched and childless mother; and from that day she was as one who had no fixed abode or resting-place; but, throughout the greater part of the year, wandered to and fro, no one could tell whither; and when she was found near the scenes of happier years, it was as a lonely dweller in the clay-built hovel of which mention has been made. She was a woman of a strong, perhaps it might be said a strange mind; but her imagination was stronger—it was fevered, and early tinctured with gloomy superstitions, until they became like a portion of her creed and her existence; and her afflictions tended to increase its morbidness.

The life of Walter Cunningham now became wrapt up in that of his only son—the child was ever before his eyes, and he watched over his growth as over a tender plant. His sole "care was to increase his store," and lay up treasure for the child of his age, the youngest and the only survivor of his flock. The number of his flocks and of his herds increased greatly, and he was in the habit of attending the fairs upon the Borders, to dispose of them. It was Whitsome fair; and he sent there many of his cattle and his sheep for sale. He also attended it, and he took with him his son, who was then a boy of from three to four years of age.

64152

It was drawing towards evening, and Mr. Cunningham, in concluding a bargain with a person who had bought a number of his cattle, was separated from his child. He had not been absent from the spot where he had left him for ten minutes; but the child had disappeared; and search was made for him throughout the fair, but he was nowhere to be found, neither could any one give tidings of him. The anxious father sought his lost child from booth to booth; and, with his friends, he also searched the adjoining woods. He called his son by name, till, from far amidst the trees, it was echoed back; but that cheerless echo, or the scream of a startled bird, was the only reply. The disappearance of the child was a mystery which no one could unriddle. His father, during the few minutes that he was to be absent, had left him in charge of a servant, who confessed having entered a drinking booth, and as the liquor went round, he perceived not that the child had left his side. For many days his father sought him sorrowing; but all search proved vain.

Mr. Cunningham returned to his house, a heart-broken and miserable man. The last, the only being that he loved on earth, had disappeared from his fond gaze, even as a beautiful vapour of strange shapes and gorgeous colours, which we gaze upon in the heavens, and turning from it but for a moment, we look for it again—but it is not. He refused to listen to words of consolation, or even of hope; and for several years he left not his house, but sat in loneliness, making a companion of his sorrow.

Now, it was on a dark and dismal winter night, seven years after the disappearance of his son, when the hail rattled fiercely against the narrow casements of his habitation, and the wind howled wildly over the earth, tearing the branches from the naked trees, and causing the cattle to crowd together for shelter—that a wild voice was heard singing a wilder dirge, as if to the measure and music of

the storm. The sound came from an open shed adjoining the house, where the cattle had been placed for shelter.

The servants informed their master that a strange woman, whose wits seemed disordered, had crept into the shed, where, before morning, from the fury of the storm, she would doubtless perish. They took a light, and he accompanied them to the shed.

Before them a wretched being sat upon the straw, and the hail dashed bitterly against her unshrinking, but time-worn and storm-beaten features. Her grey hairs waved loose and wildly in the wind. Her hands were clasped together upon her breast; and, as she sat, she sang the wild and melancholy dirge that has been mentioned. The burden of the strain was "Childless!—childless!—childless!" And again it waxed louder, and a prayer for vengeance was wildly sung. She sat and continued her dirge, regardless of their presence, and appeared as though she saw them not. The tears gathered in the eyes of Mr. Cunningham, as he listened to her dark words, and his limbs shook with a trembling motion.

"Take her into the house," said he, "and give her food and shelter for the night. If my poor boy yet live, he may be now perishing, with none to shelter him."

At his mention of his lost son, her wild strain suddenly ceased. She started to her feet; and, as she fixed upon him her haggard features, while her grey hairs and the many-coloured rags that covered her waved in the stormy wind, she seemed as though she were not an inhabitant of the earth, but rather the demon of the storm.

"Ha! ha! ha!" she cried, with a hideous laugh, that made the beholders and the hearers shudder; "shelter from you!—the murderer of my brother!—of my husband!—of my children!—of my seven fair sons!—you that have made me childless! Back to thy dwelling, dog; and, if it will add another drop of torturing anxiety to your soul, to

know that your son lives, and that you shall see him, but never know him—learn that he does live! He lives!"

"Where, woman?—where?" exclaimed the wretched father.

She hastily dashed a sort of lantern from the hand of the servant who held it, and, rushing from the shed towards the open fields, again laughed more dismally than before, and cried, "Where? She whom you have made childless, leaves that *where* to torture you for ever!"

The wretched father rushed after her; but, in the darkness, the noise, and tempest of the night, it was impossible to trace in what direction she had fled. As every reader must be already aware, the strange and fearful-looking woman was Barbara Moor, the widowed and childless mother. The words which she had spoken, regarding his son being yet alive, increased the anxious misery of Walter Cunningham. It caused his wounds, the anguish of which time had in some degree abated, to bleed afresh. At one time he doubted, and at another he believed, the words which the seeming maniac had uttered; and he made journeys to many places, in the hope of again meeting her, and of extorting from her a confession where he should find his son, or of obtaining some information that might throw light upon his fate. But his journeys then were as fruitless as his former inquiries.

We must here introduce another character to our readers, in the person of Sandy Reed. At the period at which we introduce him, he was a widower, between forty and fifty years of age, with an only daughter, named Anne, a child of five years old; and his house was kept by a maiden aunt, who was on the aged side of sixty. Sandy was a farmer near the Reed water, in Northumberland, and as fine a specimen of the ancient Northumbrian farmer as could be met with—a distinct race, a few samples of whom were here and there to be found within the last thirty

years—free, careless, hospitable, happy, boisterous, unlettered, and half-civilized. Sandy was one of these in their primitive state. He was in truth—

> "A fine old English farmer,
> One of the olden time."

He was as hardy as the hills on which his sheep fed. He was ready at all times either to shake hands or to break a head—to give or to take. No one ever entered his house and went out hungry. He had a bed, a bite, and a bottle for every one; and he was wont to say that he would rather treat a beggar than lose good company. He was no respecter of rank, nor did he understand much concerning it. He judged of the respect due to every one by what he called the "rule of good fellows." Burns makes the wife of Tam o' Shanter say—

> "Ilka horse ye ca'ed a shoe on,
> The smith and you gat roarin' fu' on."

But Tam had been but the degenerated shadow of Sandy Reed; for every time he had to pay a visit to the smith with his nag, they would have

> "Been fu' for weeks thegither!"

When he had business at Morpeth market, his journey home never occupied less than a fortnight, though the distance was not quite thirty miles; for the worthy farmer had to stop three or four days at every hostelry by the way, for the sake of company, as he affirmed, and the good of the road; but he cared not much for going half-a-dozen miles out of his way to add another house of entertainment to the number; and it mattered not to him whether the company he met with were Roundheads or Cavaliers, provided they could show the heel-taps of their bottle, and in the intervals of bringing in a new one, wrestle, run, leap, or put, or quarrel in a friendly way, if they preferred it.

But we shall record a portion of Sandy's adventures, so far as they are connected with our story, in his own words. The following was one of his favourite anecdotes of himself:—

"It was about three years after my wife's death, poor body," (he began) "that I had been owre at Morpeth market, wi' four score o' ewes and six score o' hogs. I was at least comfortable when I left Morpeth, but noughts aboon comfortable; for I had only had twenty queghs* o' English gin (which, thou must understand, in our part o' the country, means Cheviot-made whisky), and seven o' them were public-house ones, which wouldna count aboon three or four guid ones—so thou seest that I had had noughts in the world to make me onything but sober. Hoos'ever, I just thought to mysel', thinks I—drat! I'll away round by Elsdon, and see what a' my cronies there are about. So, 'To the right, Dobbin, my canny fellow,' said I to my nag—and it was as wise an animal as ever man had to speak to; it knawed every word I said, and understud me whether I was drunk or sober, mony a time, when ne'er a one else could make out what I said. But the poor beast had had sae meikle experience wi' me, that it knawed what I meant by a wink as weel as a nod. So I said to it—'To the right, Dobbin, my canny fellow; thou shalt be foddered at awd Betty Bell's t'night, and if a' be as it shud be, thou shalt hae a rest t'morrow tee, into the bargain.' So Dobbin took away across the moor to Elsdon, just as natural as a Christian could hae done. Weel, when I reached Elsdon, and went into Betty Bell's, there were five o' my cronies sitting. They were a' trumps, and they gied me three cheers when I went in, for they knawed that I was out and out a gud 'un.

"'Ha! Sandy!' said they, 'thou'rt welcome, my canny

* The wooden quegh, used as a drinking vessel in those days, contained rather more than would fill a wine glass

lad—we just wanted you to make the half dozen. Hast thou been at Morpeth?"

"'Yea,' said I, 'and hae just come round by Elsdon to hae a boot wi' thee.'

"'So be it,' said they; and we sat down in gud earnest, and three glorious days we had, and would have had mair, but that we drank Betty Bell's cupboards dry. The stars were just beginning to wink out as I got my feet in the stirrups, and to confess the truth, I was winking far worse than the stars. However, Dobbin took across the moors, and I was in the high road for my home. How it was I dinna knaw; but I rather think that I had fallen asleep, and that something or other had scared the nag, and I had slipped out o' the saddle. I mind o' lying very cauld and uncomfortable, half-dreaming, half-waking, and I daresay, more than three parts the worse o' drink. I mind, tee, o' calling to my aunt as I thought, 'Auntie!—do thou hear?—bring another blanket to throw owre me, and put out that light—I canna get a wink o' sleep for it.' Then I thought I found something upon my breast, that was like my little Anne's head, and I put my hand out, and I said, 'Is that thee, Anne love?' But there was no answer; and I gied the head a shake, when, my conscience! there was such a frightened squall got up, that I sprang right upon my feet, and, to my astonishment, there had I been lying upon the moor, wi' Dobbin at my side, and the light which I wished to have put out was neither more nor less than the moon! But what surprised me most of all, and put me about what to dow, was, that what I had taken for my little Anne that had creeped to my side, as she often did when I came home, was nowther more nor less than a wee, ragged infant laddie, that had been lying fast asleep, wi' his head upon my bosom! There wasna a living creature in human shape upon the moor but our two sells; and how he came there was a miracle to me! 'Laddie,' says I, where

dost thou come frae? What be thy faither, eh?—or thy mother? Be they alive?—or who brought thee here? Come, tell me, and I will gie thee a penny.'

"But the poor bairn seemed more bewildered to find itsel' where it was than I did, and the more I offered to speak to it, it cried the louder.

"'Why, thou needna cry,' said I, 'I winna eat thee; but how came thou here?—and where be thy faither and mother?

"However, I could get nought but screams and cries o' terror out o' the little innocent; so I cried all round the moor at the very pitch o' my voice,—'Holloa!—be there any one within hearing that has lost a bairn?' But I am thinking that I might have cried till now, and nobody would have answered, for it is my belief the bairn came there by magic! I canna say that I have seen the fairy folk mysel', though I have heard them often enough, but I am inclined to believe that they had a hand in stealing away the infant laddie frae his parents, and laying his head upon my breast on the moor. I declare to thee, though I couldna stand steady, I was at a stand still what to do. I couldna leave the infant to perish upon the moor, or I shud never hae been able to sleep in my bed again wi' the thoughts on't; and whenever I had to go to Morpeth, why, I should hae been afeared that its little ghost would hae haunted me in the home-coming; and, if I would hae been afeard o' it, it is mair than I would hae been o' meeting the biggest man in a' Northumberland. But if I took it hame, why I thought again there would be sic talking and laughing amang a' wur neighbours, who would be saying that the bairn was a son o' my awn, and my awd aunt would lecture me dead about it. However, finding I could mak naething out o' the infant, I lifted him up on saddle before me, and took him home wi' me.

"'Why, what be that thou hast brought, Sandy lad?'

asked my awd aunt, as she came to the door to meet me.

"'Why, it be a bairn, aunt, that I found on the moor, poor thing,' said I.

"'A bairn!' quoth she—'I hope thou be na the faither o't, Sandy?'

"'I'll gie thee my hand and word on't, aunt,' said I, 'that I knaw nowther the faither nor mother o't; and from the way in which I found it upon the moor, I doubt whether ever it had owther the one or the other.'

"My aunt was easier satisfied than I expected, and, by degrees, I let out the whole secret o' the story o' finding him, both to her and to my neighbours. Nobody ever came to own him, and he soon grew to be a credit to the manner in which I had brought him up. Before he could be more than seventeen, he was a match for ony man on Reed water or Coquet side, at ony thing they dared to take him up at. I was proud o' the laddie, for he did honour to the education I had gien him; and, before he was eighteen, he was as tall as mysel'. He isna nineteen yet; and my daughter Anne and him are bonnier than ony twa pictures that ever were hung up in the Duke o' Northumberland's castle. Ay, and they be as fond o' each other as two wood pigeons. It wud do thy heart gud to see them walking by Reed water side together, wi' such looks o' happiness in their eyes that ye wud say sorrow could never dim them wi' a tear. Anne will be a year, or maybe two, awder than him; but, as soon as I think he will be one-and-twenty, they shall be a wedded pair. Ay, and at my death, the farm shall be his tee—for a better lad ye winna meet in a' Northumberland, nor yet in a' the counties round about it. He has a kind heart and a ready hand; and his marrow, where strength, courage, or a determined spirit are wanted, I haena met wi'. There is, to be sure, a half-dementit, wild awd wife, they ca' Babby Moor, that gangs fleeing about wur hills, for a' the world

like an evil speerit, and she puts strange notions into his head, and makes a cloud o' uneasiness, as it were, sit upon his brow. When I saw that I would have to keep him, I didna ken what name to gie him; but after consulting wi' my friends and the clergyman o' the parish, it was agreed that he should bear the surname o' wur family, and my faither's Christian name; so we called him Patrick Reed. But the daft awd wife came upon him one day amang the hills, and she pretended to look on his brow, and read the lines on his hand, and tald him, frae them, that Patrick Reed wasna his real name, but he would find it out some day—that he was born to be rich, though he might never be rich—and that he had an awd grey-haired faither that was mourning for him night and day, and that he had adopted the son of a relation to be his heir. When he came home he was greatly troubled, but he was too open-hearted to conceal from me, or from Anne, the cause of his uneasiness; and when he had tould us a' that the mad awd wife had said, I tried to laugh him out o' thinking about it, and bade him bring the bottle and take a glass like a man, and never mind it. But Patrick was nae drinker; and he gravely said to me, that the face o' the half-daft woman came owre his brain like a confused dream—that he had something like a remembrance of what she had said; and he also thought that he remembered having seen her. I wish the witch had been in the bottom o' the sea ere she met wi' him; for ever syne then—though Anne and he are as kind and as loving as ever—he isna half the lad that he used to be; and there is nae getting him now to take a game at onything—though he could beat everybody—for either love or money."

Such was one of the stories which rough, honest, fear-nothing Sandy Reed told, in relating his adventures. Now, it came to pass, when Patrick, the foundling of whom he has spoken, had been sheltered beneath his roof for the

space of seventeen years, that Sandy, having introduced the cultivation of turnips upon the lowlands of his farm, proposed to go to Whitsome fair, to purchase cattle to fatten with them, and also sheep from the Lammermuirs to eat them on the ground. He was now more than threescore, and he was less capable of long journeys than he had been; and he requested that his adopted son Patrick, who was also to be his son-in-law, should accompany him; and it was agreed that they should set out for Whitsome together.

But, on the evening before their departure, as the maiden Anne was returning from a visit to the wife of a neighbouring farmer, she was intercepted within a mile of her father's house. The sibyl-like figure of Barbara Moor stood before her, and exclaimed—"Stand, maiden! Ye love the young man whom ye call Patrick—whom your father has so called—and who resides beneath his roof. He loves you; and ye shall be wed, if I, who have his destiny in my hand, have strength to direct it! And yet there must be more blood!—more!—for I am childless!—childless!—childless! We are not even yet!" She paused, and pressed her hand upon her brow; while the maiden, startled at her manner, trembled before her. But she again added—"Yes! yes! —ye shall be wed—the bauble wealth shall be yours, and ye deserve happiness. But hearken, ye maiden, for on the obeying of my words depends your fate. When your faither and Patrick set out for Whitsome fair, request ye to accompany them—insist that ye do, and ye shall return here a wealthy and a wedded wife; for she says it whose words were never wasted on the wind. Swear, maiden, that ye will perform what I have commanded ye."

"Woman!" said Anne, quaking as she spoke, "I never swore, and I winna swear; but I give thee my hand that I will obey thee. I will go to Whitsome fair wi' my faither and Patrick."

"Go! go!" cried the sibyl, "lest the dark spirit come

upon me; and he whom ye call Patrick shall die by his father's hand, or his father by his. But speak not of whom ye have seen, nor of what ye have heard—but go and do as ye have been commanded. Be silent till we meet again."

Anne bent her head in terror, and promised to obey; and the weird woman, again exclaiming—"Go!—be silent!—obey!" hastened from her sight.

When Anne entered the house, her father, and her adopted brother, or lover, were making ready for their journey. She sat down silently and thoughtfully in a corner of the apartment, and her half-suppressed sighs reached their ears.

"Why, what in the globe, daughter Anne," said her father, "can make thee sigh? Art thou sad because Patrick is to leave thee to go to a fair for a day or two? I suppose thou wouldn't hae troubled thy head, had thy father been to be absent as many months. But I don't blame thee; I mind I was tender-hearted at thy age, too—but Patrick knaws better what to say to thee than I do."

"Dear Anne," whispered the youth, taking her hand, "what ails thee?"

"Ask my father," she rejoined, hesitatingly, "that I may accompany you to Whitsome fair to-morrow."

"Nay, thou canst not go, dear," returned Patrick; "it is a long ride and a rough one; and the society thou wilt meet with will afford thee no pleasure, and but small amusement."

"I must go," she replied—"a strange being has laid a terrible command on me!"

"A grey-haired, wild-looking woman?" ejaculated Patrick, and his voice trembled as he spoke.

"Ask me no more," was her reply, "I must—I will accompany you."

"A dead dream," said the youth, "seems bursting into life within my brain. There are once familiar words ready to leap to my tongue that I cannot utter; and long forgotten memories haunting my mind, and flinging their shadows over it as though the substance again were approaching. But the woman that ye speak of!—yes! yes! —there is something more than a dream, dear Anne, that links my fate with her! I remember—I am sure it is no fancy—I do remember having been at a fair when I was a child—a mere child—and the woman ye allude to was there! Yes! yes!—you must accompany us! I feel, I am certain, that woman hath, indeed, my destiny in her hands!"

"Gudeness me!" exclaimed Sandy, what is it that ye twasome are saying between ye? Is there ony light thrown upon the awd story; or, is it only the half-crazed randy—(forgie me for ca'ing the poor afflicted creature by ony sic name)—but, I say, is it only some o' the same nonsense that Babby Moor has been cramming into Anne's ear wi' which she has filled thine, lad? Upon my word, if I had my will o' the awd witch, I would douk her in the Reed till she confessed that every story she has tould to thee was a lie from end to end."

"Well, father," said Patrick—for he always called Sandy father—"let Anne accompany us to the fair—she requests it, and I will also request it for her."

"Ou, ye knaw," said Sandy, "if ye hae made up yer minds between yourselves that ye are determined to gang, I suppose it would be o' no use for me to offer opposition to owther o' the two o' ye. So, if thou wilt go, get thee ready, Anne, my dear, for it will take us to be off frae here by twelve o'clock t'night, for it is a lang ride, and a rugged ride, as thou wilt find it to thy cost, ere ye be back again. I was never there for my own part; but I hear that the sale o' feeding cattle is expected to be gud—and there I maun

be. So, get thee ready, daughter, if ye will go, and hap thysel' weel up."

At midnight, Sandy Reed, his daughter, and his adopted son, with three or four farm-servants, all mounted on light, but strong and active horses, accustomed to the character of the country, set out for Whitsome fair.

They arrived at Whitsome before noon on the following day, having crossed the Tweed at Coldstream. There was one individual in the fair who had some hundred head of cattle exhibited for sale, and that was old Cunningham of Simprin. He himself was present; but he took but small interest in the transactions, for he was becoming old, and was in general melancholy; and a nephew, whom he intended to make his heir, accompanied him, and in most matters made bargains for him and in his name.

Now, Sandy Reed, after walking through the market, said the only lot that would suit him was that of Cunningham of Simprin. We may here observe that, throughout the day, young Patrick became thoughtful and more thoughtful. Even the presence of Anne, who leaned upon his arm, could hardly summon up a passing smile into his features.

After much disputing and sore bargain-making, Sandy Reed, at a good round sum, became the purchaser of all the stock that old Walter Cunningham exhibited in the fair. And when the bargain had been completed, the seller, the buyer, and their servants, retired to a booth together; the former to treat his customer with a bottle, and the latter to spend the "luck-penny," which, on such occasions, he was wont to say, would burn a hole in his pocket before he got home.

Both were men who were accustomed to drink deep—for old Cunningham had sought to drown his sorrows in the bottle; and what would have been death to another man took no effect upon him. Sandy saw him swallow

glass after glass, without his countenance betraying any symptom of change, with vexation; for he had never before met with a superior, either at the bacchanalian board, or at aught else. But, as the liquor went round, the old men began to forget their age (and for a time, for the first time, Walter Cunningham forgot his sorrows), and they boasted of what they had done; and forgetful that each was above threescore, they were ever and anon about to profess what they could still do; but on such occasions, Anne Reed, who sat by her father's elbow, gently and unobserved, admonished him.

Now, when Sandy found that he might not speak of what he could do, he thought there could be no harm in saying what his adopted son Patrick could do. He offered to match him at anything against any man in Berwickshire, yea in all Scotland. The blood of old Cunningham boiled at the bravado. He said he had had three sons—yea, he hoped to have said four—any of whom would have stopped the boasting, and taken up the challenge of his Northumbrian friend. But he said he had still a nephew, and he would risk him against Sandy's champion.

"A bargain be it," cried Sandy, and the young men proceeded to various trials of strength; but the nephew of Cunningham, though apparently a strong man, was as a weaned child in the hands of young Patrick. Their countrymen, on both sides, became enraged, and it soon became a national quarrel. Scores were engaged on either side—knives were drawn and blood spilt: and headmost in the fray, but unarmed, was Sandy Reed, striking to the ground every one on whom his hand fell. But at length he fell, pierced by a knife, by the edge of a pool of water; and his last words were—"Revenge me, Patrick—protect my Anne—mine is yours!"

When weapons were exhibited, young Patrick drew one also, and he dealt a wound at every blow. Just as he heard

the voice of his foster-father, he held the aged Cunningham by the throat, and his hand was uplifted to avenge his protector's death by the sacrifice of the old man's—when a loud, a hurried, and a wild voice cried aloud—"Hold, parricide! hold!—he against whom your hand is raised is your father!"

It was the voice of Barbara Moor. The young man's arms fell by his side as if a palsy had smitten them. He remembered the voice of the sibyl.

"What say ye!" cried the agonised old man—"who is my son?—how shall I know him?" For he, too, remembered her and well.

"He whose hand has been raised against your life," she cried, "and on whose bosom ye will remember and find the mark of a berry! Farewell!—farewell!" she added—"I am childless—ye are not." She had been wounded in the conflict as she rushed forward, and she sank down and died. We might lengthen our story with details; but it would be fruitless. In young Patrick old Cunningham found his long lost son; with her last breath Barbara Moor acknowledged how she had decoyed him from the tent, at the fair, where his father had left him; and how, when she saw Sandy Reed asleep upon the moor, she had administered to the child a sleeping draught, and laid him upon his breast. Vain would it be to describe the joy of the old man, and as vain would it be to speak of the double chagrin of the nephew, who lost not only his laurels during the day, but also his hope of riches. Anne sorrowed many days for her father; but gave her hand to him who, in compliance with her request, his father continued to call Patrick; the fountain by the side of which her father fell is still known in the village of Whitsome by the name of *Reed's Well;* and, on account of the life lost, and the blood shed on that occasion, Whitsome fair has been prohibited unto this day.

THE SURGEON'S TALES.

THE DIVER AND THE BELL.

I HAVE witnessed various states of the mind and body of the wonderfully constructed creature, man; and have written down those cases where the two mutually operate upon each other, in such a manner as to bring out startling characteristics, which, by many, are scarcely believed to belong to our nature. I am now to exhibit a case, where an extreme love of mental excitement produced by extraordinary sights and positions, gave rise to a specie. of disease, which we have no name for in our nosology. The individual was a Mr. Y——, a gentleman of fortune, who came to reside in the town where I practise. When I first visited him, I found him a poor emaciated creature, sick of the world, dying of *ennui*, thirsting after morbid excitements, yet shuddering at the recollection of what he had witnessed. I saw at once that he was a victim of some engrossing master passion, that had fed upon the natural feelings and sentiments, till his whole soul was under the power and operation of the presiding demon; and got him to give me an account of the manner in which he became enthralled.

Even now, he began—and he trembled as the thoughts he was to evolve recurred to him, even now, though it is fully two years since I was placed in one of the most extraordinary situations in which man was ever doomed to be, I cannot call up again the ideas and sensations which then occupied my mind, without trembling, and endeavouring to fly, as it were, from myself, and, by seek-

ing for natural thoughts among natural appearances and converse, rear up again the belief that I am a regularly organized being, capable of again becoming happy among the sons of men. But the thought still haunts me as a spectre, that I may be once more, by some other cause not less fortuitous than that which then took me out of the region of experience, precipitated, in spite of all my care, into some new position, where the feelings which we are led to consider as a part of our nature, may be so entirely changed that no new world we are capable of conceiving any notion of, could possibly produce a more extraordinary disruption of all the old workings of the brain. Oh! it is a fearful thought, but one seldom entertained by the slaves of experience. Changes occur daily to all men; but, in the general case, each mere worldly position of ever-changing circumstances, possesses so much of the form and character of some prior one, that we are very soon reconciled to the idea of a variety composed of a mere mutation of the mixture of old elements. The mind, looked upon as a microcosm peopled by the representations of things that be—of the past and possible, of the future and probable—is held to be our own little world, with which, and all its inhabitants, we are or may be familiar; we forget that there are recesses in it, or capabilities within it, that may contain or produce things as new as striking, as horrible as if they were the creations of an unknown power, out of elements we never saw or heard of. A sane person, living and acting in the world, may be for a time mad, but with the difference, that, while ordinary maniacs know not their condition, he may be conscious of a thinking identity, while all his thoughts seem to be imposed upon him by other powers than those that regulate this sphere, and he is himself, what he was, but placed in a new world, and acted on by new impulses at which he shudders, but which he is sternly bound to receive and

feel. What a view does this open up to the state of man in this lower world!—how much is there in it of a cause of humiliation and trembling. I am myself, from what I suffered, altogether a changed being; having no faith in the stability of things; conceiving myself placed among dangerous rocks and precipices, from which, in the next moment, I may fall, I know not where; and eyeing with doubt and dismay even the most composed and settled of all the circumstances of life. He is a happy man who is doomed to pass from the cradle to the grave, without having cause to *experience* the faithlessness of experience, who has only read of those dreadful disruptions of the mind and feelings, that scatter the old elements, in order that some new consolidating power may throw them into forms and combinations a thousand times more horrible than all the creation of dark brooding incubus.

Like most other men of an ardent and imaginative temperament, I was dissatisfied with the dull routine of ordinary things. I used to feed my fancy with creatures of the possible, and, without the aid of artificial stimulants of the brain, often conjured up imaginary beings and predicaments which had a charm for me, I cannot very well explain or account for. I cared little for dreams, or the artificial combinations produced by narcotics; they had too little of reality for me: I never was satisfied with a mere effort of the fancy, where the judgment was entirely in abeyance, or at least mocked by what it had no control over. In the world around me, I found food for my appetite; whatever I saw or heard of the *real*, I wrought upon in my solitary moments, till I produced creations, that, being actually within the limits of the possible, I could survey with the satisfaction that I was contemplating what might or would be actually experienced in some future stage of the world. Yet it is a fact—and no one who knows anything of morbid indulgences of this kind

can doubt it—that it is questionable, even to myself, whether, upon the whole, I ever derived any real pleasure from these moods of the mind. The imaginary positions I loved most, were generally of the painful kind: the greater the sufferings of the personages concerned in my various plots of combined circumstances, the more was my propensity gratified. From this morbid state of excitement, I was, of course, often precipitated, by the mere decay of the cerebral energy that fed it; and when I was forced again to contemplate and mix with the common affairs of life, I felt the contrast operate to the disadvantage of even the most stirring incidents that are daily befalling mankind. I was, indeed, much in the position of those who stimulate the fancy by extraneous applications; all the boasted efforts of judgment I tried to mix up with and control the workings of my fancy, I found were but a species of delusive energies, to take myself out of a class of dreamers I heartily despised. I was, in fact, just as complete a visionary as they—with this difference, —I thought I required to satisfy the condition of a waking judgment, which, after all, had very little to do in the matter.

There was, however, one peculiarity of my character not found among my class of visionaries. I was always anxious to throw myself into situations that, being new and wonderful, might supply my mind with a species of experience, from which, in my after moods, I might draw, as from a real source, all the *substrata* of my creations. I visited asylums, executions, and dissecting-rooms; accompanied Mr ——, the aeronaut, in his ascent from Manchester; when on the Continent, I stood below the falls of Terne, and descended into that hell upon earth, the mines of Presburg; yet I must avow that I was a coward; the very experiences I courted, I often trembled at, not only at the time when the objects were busy with my senses,

and sending their influences through my nerves to my brain, but afterwards, when I called up the images to my mind, and threw them into the forms that obeyed the creative power of my fancy. I was also, in some degree, peculiar in caring little for the works of fictioneers; if I were to try to account for this, I would trace the cause to the same disposition of mind that led me to despise all artificial modes of stimulus. The fancies of other men roused my scepticism; my own, founded always on experience, and never going beyond the province of the possible, seemed to me to possess a reality sufficient to satisfy the conditions of my deluded judgment. It had been fortunate for me had I been less exclusive in my resources of gratification; and oh, how dearly I paid for these my imaginative flights, may too soon be made apparent to those who follow me in my narrative, to be benefited, I trust, from my errors.

I had nearly exhausted all my stock of real perceptions, and was beginning to be forced to recombine my old thoughts, so as to produce new associations of the strange and wonderful, when I accidentally met with Mr W——, a gentleman well known in the world of experimental science by the improvements he made on the diving-bell, in addition to the contributions of Rennie and Spalding. I was then living at E——, and he was on his way to Portsmouth, to superintend the workings of a bell that had been sent thither for the purpose of recovering the specie contained in the ship A——, which had been sunk on her return from South America. He described to me the construction of the bell, the manner in which it was worked, and the many extraordinary sights that the divers saw in the course of their submarine operations. I told him that I had accompanied Mr ——, the aeronaut, in his ascent from Manchester, and had often felt a strong desire to reverse my former flight, and descend into the great

deep, to see its wonders, and compare my sensations with those I had already experienced in the air. He told me that my wish might easily be gratified; adding that, although he had never been beyond the top of a steeple, he could take it upon him to assure me, that the feeling of vastness and sublimity induced by an aerial ascent, was almost in direct contrast to the sensations of the diver—the one being comparable to the effects produced by the enlarged views of generalization, indulged in by speculative ontologists—the other, to those that result from the inductive process of searching into the physical arcana of nature. He was not aware of the bent of my mind, or his comparison might have been made more suitable to the feelings of one who cared far less for science than the monstrous things of thaumatology; but he had said enough, or rather the mere mention of the subject was sufficient to fire my fancy; and, after he left me, I brooded continually on the subject of the bed of the great deep—that world unexplored by man, where strange creatures obey laws unknown to us, and feed on the dead bodies of those who relentlessly pursue them; where the bones of the men of distant nations meet and cross each other—those of the sons of science and those of the unlettered negro, bound together by tangled sea-weed—orbless skulls, the receptacles of unclassified reptiles, lying on the treasures that the living man sighed to bring home, as the reward of his toils in foreign lands; and where the very mystery of the unexplored recesses throws a green shadow over the strange inhabitants and things of the earth, buried there for countless ages, that makes the whole watery world like a vision of enchantment. I had found a new source of unthought of reveries, that would supply my enraptured hours with aliment according to my wishes. The objects to be seen within the short space circumscribed by the bell, or comprehended within the range of its lights,

could not be many; but there was the new mode, as it were, of existence—the breathing under water, the living in the element of the creatures of the deep, all the multifarious sensations that would spring up in the mind and body, as if some new power of life and feeling penetrated to the very well-springs of existence.

A letter from Mr W—— soon afterwards invited me to Portsmouth, from which I was then not far distant. The divers had been for some time busy; a great part of the wreck had been laid open, and some curious discoveries been made, and treasures recovered, which inspired the workmen with ardour. On the following day, I was at the scene of operation. When I went on board of the lighter, from which the bell was suspended, I examined the apparatus. The bell was then down, the men stood holding the crane, and listening attentively to hear the signals that were, every now and then, coming from the divers. At a little distance was the apparatus of the air-pump, which several other workmen were busily engaged working. The whole scene was calculated to produce an extraordinary impression on a beholder. The sky was hazy; the air thick and oppressive, from the heat of the sun acting upon the dense medium of a mist that hung on the water; there was not a breath of wind to ruffle the surface of the calm deep; the only sound heard was the whizzing of the air-pump, and the clang of the apparatus by which it was worked. There was nothing seen of the bell; it was far down in the bosom of the deep. The chain, by which it was suspended, dipped into the sea and disappeared, carrying the mind with it down to the grim recesses where living, breathing men were buried. Clear as the waters were, the eye could not reach the depth to which the huge living cemetery had descended; a recoiling feeling, which made the heart leap, followed the effort to trace the chain down, down through the translucent sea. The red sun,

struggling through the mist, was reflected in a lurid glow from the surface of the deep. As the air-pump ceased for short intervals, and absolute silence reigned around, a clang, unlike any sounds of earth, came upon the ear—

> "As if the ocean's heart were stirred
> With inward life, a sound is heard."

It was a signal from those in the bell; it seemed as if the sea trembled, and old Ocean spoke from the deeper recesses of his soul. The sound struck the ear as something unnatural, or what might be conceived to issue from a sepulchre when the spirits of the dead hold converse in the still night. The signal was answered; and, in a short time afterwards, there were heard three successive strokes quickly repeated—clang, clang, clang. The quickness of the strokes, and the strangeness of the sound, coming whence such sounds are never heard, seemed the doom-peal of these men.

> "The sea around me, in that sickly light,
> Shewed like the upturning of a mighty grave."

But the sound told other things to the workmen: the wheel began to revolve; after many revolutions, the waters began to boil as if moved by a ground swell, and the large black engine appeared rising up like a mighty monster of the deep.

When the bell was fairly suspended above the water, the crane was pulled round, and the heavy appendage was wheeled over the deck of the lighter. There were three individuals in it, seated high and dry upon the *vis-à-vis* seats. There were instruments of various kinds hung round the inside, the uses of which were explained to me. The men told me that a storm, a few days before, had so broken up and removed the wreck, that it would be necessary to pull the lighter a little farther to the eastward. It came out, too, with some indications of terror which they at-

tempted to conceal, that the dead bodies of those who had perished in the cabin were beginning to make their appearance, now that the hull was broken. Mr W—— looked at me askance, as if to ascertain whether that circumstance would have any effect in making me forego my purpose in descending; and, doubtless, he observed me shudder. But he knew me not: the expedition possessed greater, perhaps grimmer charms to me on that account: the horror that passed over me, as I heard the statement of the men, was only an indication that my zeal was stirred by the expectation of food for my depraved appetite.

"Dead men are not the most dangerous enemies of divers," said Mr W——, with a grim smile. "We have sometimes greater reason to be alarmed from inroads of the living inhabitants of the waters. It is not a week yet since the fearful *tenth* signal rung from the deep; and, upon the machine being raised in great alarm by the workers of the crane, it was ascertained that a shoal of finners (some of them fourteen feet long) had passed close by the mouth of the bell, with a noise like the rushing of a mighty army. But the alarm was greater on the side of the creatures themselves: on observing the bell with the men in it, they lashed their tails with fearful fury, till the waters seemed to boil in the midst of them, and the whole host were enshrined in a thick muddy medium that prevented the divers from seeing an inch before them. The sound, meanwhile, was like that of thunder—snorting, lashing, and shrill cries, produced by some action of their breathing organs, were mixed together; and the confusion into which they were thrown precipitated many of them on the sides of the bell, which being at the time suspended from within five feet of the ground, swung from side to side in such a manner as to rouse the fears of the workmen above before the signal reached their ears. In a short time afterwards, when the bell was raised, we saw the shoal making with great speed

to the westward, blowing, as they careered onwards, with a loud noise. I never knew of a circumstance of the same kind before; and to-day you will not, I trust, be alarmed by such visitors."

This statement roused my fears, already excited by what I had heard of the dead bodies that lay on the wreck; but I adhered to my purpose. The lighter was moved about twenty feet eastward, and the bell was again swung round to be let down, it being resolved that I should accompany the divers in their next descent. I watched the operations with an interest derived from my expected position in the same circumstances with these fearless men. The huge mass hung in the air, dangling over the smooth surface of the sea; and the signal being given, was plunged down. In a moment it had disappeared, and a heavy mass of waters rushed on, swelling and boiling in the abyss, that seemed to have entombed the daring adventurers. The rolling off of the chain in a long succession of coils, and the disappearance of link after link, filled the mind with a shuddering impression of the depth to which they were attaining. The signal was again given; the air-pump began to play and whiz, and my thoughts, burdened with the superstitious fear produced by the narratives I had heard, took a new direction, picturing the men among the floating bodies of the dead mariners, which, among the green lights of the sea, would appear invested with additional horrors—the monsters of the deep playing round them, or feasting upon the decayed limbs—numberless crabs, sea urchins, and centipedes, crawling on members once consecrated to beauty. The silence on board the lighter aided my fancy in its gloomy revels; and when the clang of the hammer on the bell announced the wish of the divers to rise again, I started from a seat on a coil of ropes which I had in my musings taken possession of—having been oblivious of the intervening half hour, during

which I had been shadowing forth the secrets of the green charnel-house, with its surface lying smiling before me in the lurid glare of the still enshrouded sun.

At last, I was called to take my seat in the bell. One of the men came out to make room for me; but, before I entered, the crane was swung round to the west side of the lighter, as the men reported that a more likely field of investigation lay in that direction, where they had observed a bright body which they took for a mass of glittering specie, probably rolled out of the packages, and lying there from its greater specific gravity. On mounting up into the bell, where the two remaining workmen were refreshing themselves with brandy to recover the play of the lungs, which, in the last descent, had suffered from a deficiency of oxygen, I felt a creeping sensation pass over me, in spite of my efforts to be calm and firm. This I attributed to the already excited state of my fancy, from the long train of musings I had indulged in over the green deep. In my ascent with the aeronaut, I experienced a sensation in some degree similar to that feeling of lofty awe which accompanies the expectation of the grand impulse of sublimity—*τον σφοδρὸν και ἐνθουσιαστικὸν πάθος*; but now the action of the heart seemed tending towards a collapse rather than a swell: I felt already the chilling effect of the cold element before I had descended into its womb. I looked round me with a nervous eye, and threw the colours of my fancy on even common objects. The dull yolks of glass placed round the sides to give light, pale and lustreless—the iron tools, wet and brown with rust—the black leather flasks of spirits—the big hammer used for signals of distress—were all strange and invested with new characters; and the two men, Jenkins, an Englishman, and Vanderhoek, a German, with sallow countenances, rendered paler than usual by the effects of the confined air, seemed rather to belong to the watery

element from which they had emerged, than to the fair and smiling earth. I attempted to look unconcernedly; but the German, as he was lifting his flask to his head, scanned me with a ludicrous gaze, and, whether it was that the brandy had, in some degree, inclined him to a merriment that in my eyes seemed like the grin of a demon, or that he wished to let me hear the *ringing* sound of the bell when the human voice echoed within it, I know not; but he accompanied his potations with a stanza of Burger's famous Zechlied:—

"Ich will einst, bei ja und nein
Vor dem Zapfen sterben
Alles, meinen Wein nur nicht
Lass' Ich frohen erben."

And, finishing the verse, he looked again at me, to notice the effect produced on me by the reverberation of the tones, which, reflected from all sides, mixed as it were in the middle, and loaded the ear with a confused ringing noise, similar to what I once heard when nearly drowned in the Thames. If the man had had any intention to increase my alarm, he could not have taken a more effectual way of compassing his intention; for his language—the true and natural diction of spirits—responded to by the confused ringing echoes of the bell, and acting upon a mind already enervated by the weight of the genius of superstition, appeared to be all that was necessary to complete the alarm which I in vain attempted to conceal.

"All ready, Vanderhoek?" cried Mr W——.

"Ja, ja, herr," responded Vanderhoek. "Pull away, Crane-meistern."

And as the men began to work, he dashed carelessly into another stanza of his favourite ballad. I know not if you are acquainted with German; but I cannot resist the desire of gratifying my own ears with a repetition of the sounds of the thrilling consonants which produced so great

an effect on me on that occasion. His voice was rough and guttural:—

"Wann der Wein in Himmelsclang,
Wandelt mein Geklimper,
Sind Homer, and Ossian,
Gegen mich nur Stumper."

I would have called out to the man to cease his singing, had I not been afraid of being set down for a coward. The continued sound within prevented me from observing the motion of the bell, as it gradually swung off the deck; but the increasing novelty of my situation, as I saw myself suspended over the calm sea into which I was immediately to be plunged, fixed my attention, while it increased my nervousness. I would now have retreated, had it been in my power. The calculated knowledge of the process of submersion, and of my absolute safety under the laws of hydraulics, lost so much of its power under the reigning influence of the natural instinctive horror of being plunged into the womb of the ocean, that I thought myself on the eve of being drowned; and the same feeling I had experienced when struggling half-dead with the waters of the Thames took hold of me by anticipation. Meanwhile, the German started broken snatches of his song; the bell was gradually descending; the space of pure light between the rim and the green surface of the sea was growing every minute less and less. It was upon that decreasing circle of air that my eye was most intensely fixed; it grew brighter as the inside of the bell grew darker, till in a moment it appeared like a bright line of gold-coloured light.

"There," said Jenkins to me, in a loud tone. "That is the last glimpse. This is the most trying moment for inexperienced divers, when the last beam of day is extinguished."

I could not reply to him. The circle had disappeared; the water was below our feet; we were partially submerged.

I looked up to the yolks of glass, but the light that struggled through them was so pale and sickly that I turned my eyes to the sea below me as a relief to my confined vision. We were now fast descending—one by one the gas lights were changed from their dim paleness to a green hue, the same as that of the sea below us, and, in an instant after, I heard a loud whizzing, which was produced by the displaced body of waters rushing impetuously into the void made by the descending bell. The sound made me instinctively turn my head upwards, as if I had been in the attitude of addressing the King of the heavens, whom I had left in the regions of upper air. I grew dizzy, and thought I would have fallen from the bench, down into the bottom of the sea. My nervousness made me grasp firmly the plank, as my only means of safety from what I conceived to be impending destruction. Whether that sound then ceased, or my hearing became more obtuse, I know not; but the first thing, after a few minutes, that I was conscious of was the grasp of the hand of Jenkins, who held me firm by the arm, and the guttural sounds of the German, as he still carelessly sung detached lines of his ballad. On looking up, the green lights swam in my eyes; but the whizzing sound had greatly ceased; and I directed again my gaze to the apparently bottomless element below, which was as calm as glass, and through which I saw, flying past the mouth of the bell, innumerable fishes, reflecting, as they darted off, a thousand varied hues, in the midst of the green medium through which they hurried.

The continued descent was made apparent to the eye by the progress of the rim of the bell through the water, and indicated, in another form, by the creaking sound of the crane on the lighter, which, rendered indistinct by the medium of the water, seemed to come from miles distant. Though partially recovered from the first effects of the

submersion, I had no proper idea of time, and there was no mode of measuring the depth. It seemed to me as if we had descended many furlongs, though we had not got beyond ten fathoms: I could not get quit of the idea, though I arranged my thoughts in the process of calculation. Jenkins had now let go my arm, as he saw that I was able to sit without danger of falling; and the German was busy peering through his bushy eyebrows down into the deep, as if he expected soon "to see the land." I almost instinctively gazed down for the same object, and it was not without an effort at discrimination by the power of my judgment that I discovered myself seeking a vision of the bottom of the sea, as if it had been a haven for a shipwrecked mariner in distress. While my eyes were thus fixed on the waters—in which I could see nothing but the swarms of fishes flying past, or reeling in the confusion of terror—I was startled, almost to falling off the bench, by a loud reverberating clang on the side of the bell. My first impression was, that the bell had struck on a rock; and I turned fearfully to seek the eye of Jenkins. He held the large hammer in his hand with which he had given the stroke. He told me that he wanted more air, and that this was the signal to the workers of the air-pump. His eye was fixed on the air holes, with which the pipes communicated. I thought he appeared alarmed; he exchanged a look with Vanderhoek, and the eye of the latter was soon also fixed on the same spot. We were yet still descending, and the German, turning round, pointed down. I followed his finger, and saw a thick, hazy-like appearance, as if the waters were troubled, and masses of long sea-weed brushed against the rim of the bell. Vanderhoek immediately seized the hammer, rang two loud peals, and the motion downwards ceased. We hung suspended in the sea, I know not how many fathoms down. A loud hissing sound came from the air-valves; but it was

every moment interrupted, as if some part of the apparatus failed in its continuous working. The eyes of both Jenkins and Vanderhoek were again intensely fixed upon the holes; it was too manifest to me that they both saw something wrong in the working of the air pumps, though they said nothing to me; and, indeed, I was so much affected by their ominous looks that I could put no question to them.

"Is there not an under current here, Karl?" said Jenkins, attempting to appear composed.

"Ja," replied Vanderhoek; "see, there is von gut sign. The meer-weeds are drifting to the east; and see, there is von piece of the wreck moving from the west."

I looked down, and saw the edge of a piece of black timber making its appearance within the verge of the rim of the bell; but, in consequence of the small angle afforded by our pent-up position, we could not observe more than two inches of it. Large bushes of confusedly entangled sea-weed were brushing past, and, as they stuck about the rim, darkened the interior so much that we could scarcely see each other. These seemed of but small importance to Jenkins, who was evidently still unsatisfied with the working of the pumps, and got upon his feet to examine into the cause of their irregular and interrupted action. It struck me, at this time, that Jenkins' question about the current had more meaning in it than was made apparent to me: I suspected that he entertained fears that the air tubes had got entangled in some way with the bell chain. His efforts did not seem to produce any greater regularity of action in the tubes; the whizzing noise continued every now and then to be interrupted; at one time, it stopped altogether for about a minute. The machinery was working reluctantly, and with a struggling difficulty that was apparent to the eye and ear; but other proofs of a more decided and fearful kind were awaiting us. I felt a painful load at my breast, as if I wanted air; my respiration

became quick and unsatisfactory; a swimming of the head came over me; I could scarcely see my companions without great effort to fix my wavering vision. The darkness at the mouth of the bell continued to increase; the piece of the wreck was moving slowly under us; the weeds were increasing. I could perceive that Vanderhoek was also labouring for breath; Jenkins, relinquishing his efforts at the air tube mouths, turned, looked wildly at his neighbour, and, staggering down upon the bench, struggled to get hold of the hammer, which, when he grasped it tremblingly, fell out of his hands down into the bottom of the sea.

"In the name of God! what is the meaning of all this, Jenkins?" I cried, in a voice that was choked for want of air.

He lay upon the bench, and gasped, apparently unable to speak; he looked to Vanderhoek, and pointed to an instrument in the shape of a mattock—shaking his hand, and muttering indistinctly, "Haste! haste!"

The sign and words were perfectly understood by Vanderhoek as well as by myself. I looked on, with the intense agony of fear and impeded lungs, and added some irregular and confused signs (for my voice died in my choking throat) to the German to obey the request of his neighbour—but these were unnecessary: the man himself saw the fearful position in which we were placed, with as keen a perception of the danger, and as anxious a wish to remove it, as either of us. He was, however, struggling for want of air to a greater extent than either Jenkins or myself. His face was swollen and blue, his mouth open, his eyes protruding from his head, his breast heaving like one under the weight of the angel of death. Yet he tried to combat the antagonist powers of cruel fate; and, raising his body from the bench, he bent forward to clutch the mattock, with which to give the clangs that formed

the signal to raise us from our water-bound prison. He had to reach over the body of Jenkins, who lay coiled up, almost lifeless from suffocation; then, in his efforts to get at the instrument, he fell down through the mouth of the bell, and stuck fast among the tangled weed. At this very instant, I heard again the sound of the air-pump whizzing in my ears: it came like the music of angels; and, while Vanderhoek hung fast by a rope that was attached to the bench, I felt the inspiring power of the oxygen coming through the air tubes: my breast rose—my lungs inhaled the sweet aliment—I felt strength infused into my blood and nerves—and, raising myself, laid hold of Vanderhoek; but my energy failed in the effort that exceeded my powers; he fell from my grasp, and plunged overhead among the waters and loose weeds by the side of the dark piece of the wreck, that still seemed to move, though almost imperceptibly, to the east. It was a little time before he came to the surface again, which satisfied me that we were still a considerable way from the bottom, notwithstanding of the accumulation of algæ that had deceived us into a contrary opinion. When his head again appeared within the bell, I was struck fearfully by the horrid expression of his face, which, pale before, now looked green and hideous through the wreaths of weed that hung round his hair. The influx of atmospheric air partially revived his energies for self-preservation; then laying hold of the rope, he got a clutch of the bench, and clambered up. He seemed shocked by some cause of terror, even greater than the danger to which we were yet exposed.

"Shrecken! shrecken!" he muttered, with difficulty. "There is von corpse of a woman there—there—down in the wreck!"

And he pointed to the black fragment of the broken ship that lay below us.

"That is nothing, man," said I. "Give the signal, if you can. See, the air-pump has stopped again. The men in the lighter know not our peril."

He attempted again to seize the mattock, and succeeded in grasping it; but the small supply of air that had been sent us by the temporary opening of the impeded tube, had been only sufficient to revive us slightly; and the suddenness with which his powers were again prostrated, by the recurring weakness that succeeded the cessation of the supply of the natural aliment of the lungs, prevented him from imparting strength to the signal. He gave one weak blow on the side of the bell, and the instrument fell out of his nerveless hands upon the bench. In a few moments more he was stretched beside Jenkins. I myself now tried to lift my arms to seize the instrument. I succeeded only in placing my hands upon it—I was unable to grasp it, and fell, with my back on the side of the bell, powerless, and struggling, with open mouth and heaving sternum, for what came not—a breath of living air.

We must, at this time, have been fully twenty minutes under water; and, as it was our intention to have been an hour, there seemed to be no chance of our being drawn up until we had all expired. I saw plainly, by the noises that came from the tubes, that the men conceived they were working regularly; and, so long as no signal was heard, they would work on, ignorant of the dreadful situation in which we lay. I cast my eyes on my companions. They lay like dead men; my only wonder, now that I can calmly think of the subject, is, that they still kept upon the seats, and did not tumble into the deep. I had scarcely any power of thinking. I sat, writhing under the spasmodic action of suffocation, my eyes fixed in the sockets, my brain swimming, and a burning sensation, like that which attends a paroxysm of brain fever, shooting through the recesses of thought. The recollection of that

moment is even yet madness. The bell was almost dark, and the green light that came through the yolks of glass, fell faintly on the blue swollen faces of my companions, who I thought were dead. I had still power to observe that there was a new feature rising in that unprecedented situation of man's sufferings. Was it possible, it may fairly be asked, that fate had it in store to add to these agonies?

While thus I sat fixed immovably by weakness and despair, I observed that the waters were rising visibly upon us, probably from the absorption of the small quantity of oxygen that remained in the tainted air around us. It had risen up half way between the rim and the seats, and was gradually gaining upon me. A foot more would bring it to the level of where I sat. My feet were already immersed, and the coldness produced by the water operated in combination with the spasms in my labouring chest to destroy vitality. The black fragment of the wreck rose with the waters, and raised obliquely the side of the bell, which may have been an additional cause for the rising of the sea within. Through my glazed eye I saw, lying in a hollow of the broken raft, a white figure—probably that seen by Vanderhoek when he fell into the sea. By and by, it became more visible as the waters rose, and I saw that it was the body of a female who had perished in the vessel. The image of the apparition has haunted me to this hour, and shall do till I die. A part of the dress which she had worn when she perished, still clung to her—about the half of the skirt of a silk gown that had been of some light colour, but had changed to a greenish hue. It was bound to the waist by a sash or belt of a darker shade. Her bosom was bare, and bore the same sickly hue of pale green; her face was placid; the eyes were open; but one of the balls had been extracted by some reptile of the deep; her long hair

flowed among the weeds; and, hanging from the lobe of the left ear, I saw a clear gem that shone with the brightness of the stone called *aqua marina*. One of the arms had been taken off a little above the elbow; the flesh at the end of the stump appeared bloodless, and bleached to the colour of the skin; and limpets and other kinds of small shell-fish lay on or adhered to the cuticle. My feelings recoil from the recollections of the horrors of that apparition; and I fear I may incur the charge of endeavouring to produce an effect by the vulgar mode of harassing the mind with a minute description, too easily effected, of what, for the sake of humanity, should be concealed.

There the body lay in all its green horror. It was rising gradually to my side, within the bell, through the gloom of which the pale skin and light robes sent a sickly gleam. I had no power to move myself away from it. My body was bent so that my face was within a few inches of it; and a slight undulation of the waters that were rising into the bell inch by inch, imparted to the corpse a motion that made it dodge upwards and downwards, as if it made efforts to touch my countenance. All was as silent as death; for the slight agitation of the sea produced no noise. I was gasping for breath; a short period would have put an end to my sufferings, had not the air tubes again begun to send forth slight hissing sounds, and a small portion of the food of the lungs came to afford me sufficient power to contemplate, with greater distinctness and increased agony, all the circumstances of my situation. I felt the small boon instinctively as a relief: my breast again opened; I was able to raise my head so as to be more beyond the touch of the floating corpse; and as I lifted it, my eye fell on the flask of spirits that hung within reach on the side of the bell. I now struggled to seize it, and succeeded; but it was with many painful efforts that I got a portion of the liquor poured

into my mouth. The half-dead physical powers of my system were, by this application, stimulated into something like vitality, and I listened attentively, while my eye was still riveted on the corpse that lay at my side, to the sound of the tubes. A motion of the right limb of Vanderhoek attracted my attention, and raised a hope that, if the air still continued to be supplied, he would recover; I knew, too, that as the bell filled again with the atmospheric supply, the waters would recede. But all my hopes were again prostrated; the valve ceased; the entrance of the air was again stopped; I applied the flask hastily again to my lips before the spasms of suffocation came again upon me, but the power of the spirits seemed to have fled, having no more influence over my system than a draught of water.

Thus was I again precipitated into my former condition of weakness and helplessness—the choking symptoms of suffocation increased again in intensity, and I was under the necessity to lie down on the seat, with my head again on a level with the corpse of the female, that still kept moving and dodging by my side. I was now as powerless to push it away as I was before to remove myself from it. I felt it touch my skin. Its face was close to mine—the pale cold cheek rubbed upon my chin and lips. The glazed eye seemed fixed upon me, and the stump of the torn arm struck upon me as the body moved. A higher undulation sometimes threw her flowing hair over my eyes, where it lay till another movement of the corpse took it off. I would have shut the lids of the protruding orbs that stood fixed in my head, if I had had any power; but I could not—my whole face being swollen, and the muscles as rigid as if in death. I was thus compelled to receive the vision into my mind; and the touch seemed to cling to the decaying sensibilities, as if it formed a part of them. It is impossible that my sufferings could have

lasted many minutes longer if the air tubes had been entirely closed; but, as if it had been determined by the stern fates that I should be suspended for a length of time between life and death, there were kept up, at almost regular intervals, two or three whizzing sounds of the entangled and obstructed apparatus — an indication that small supplies of air were at these moments thrown in upon me. It was only these sounds, the dodging of the pale-green corpse, the touches of its cold skin, the light of its glazed eye, the dark figures of my two companions, and the general gloom of the bell, relieved slightly by the greenish-hued yolks of glass, that I was sensible of perceiving. The internal workings of my mind seemed to have ceased. I had scarcely any consciousness of a conception — the whole cerebral functions concerned in thought and feeling being limited to undefined sensation, that had only some connection with the power of external perception.

Even this partial state of consciousness had died gradually away, for, during a short period, I was totally beyond the reach of the power of any external object. There is a blank in my recollection of these touches and visions, which, though scarcely at the time coming within the province of mind, have since been the most vivid perceptions ever treasured up in my memory. Yet that period of all but total death was no relief to me. The dim hazy vision of all around me dawned again, like the shadowy renovations of a fearful dream that has sunk in sleep, and risen again as the troubled fancy regained a portion of its activity. These indistinct shadows of consciousness, as they came in the wake of the physical power that felt the quickening influence of another draft of air, carried more insufferable sensations in their dark forms than had accompanied my more distinct perceptions. They were mere filmy traces, broken and unconnected—exhibiting to me some-

times only the darkness of the bell, sometimes the mere face; occasionally limited to the eye alone, the stump of the arm alone, the ear-ring alone; sometimes merely the two stretched-out forms of the men; sometimes the green deep and the tangled sea-weed. Then the array of all the things around me would suddenly flash upon me with a unity and a vividness that produced one gleam of almost entire consciousness—in another moment extinguished—and succeeded by another period of all but death—to be again followed by a succession of the broken fragments of vision, when the living powers were in a slight degree revived. I leave it to physiologists and psychologists to account for these sudden exertions of the reluming powers of the mind in the very lowest state of the dying faculties. We see something of the same kind in the physical economy—moments of strength in the most exhausted weakness—bright glows of the taper of life in the socket of death—a collected unity of power in moments of dissolution, as if the spirit made a last struggle to assert its lost authority over the great archangel. I can speak at least to their effects—a wretched boon of nature to miserable man, where he can say no more than that he feels—that the boasted energies of the soul seem to be all rolled up in one sensation of undescribable pain.

I was awakened from this state of stupor by a loud clanking of chains upon the top of the bell; and I heard the sound at the very moment when I felt myself drawing a long breath. I had been unconscious of the working of the air-pump, which must have been going on for some time, though I cannot tell how long. The bell was replenished. I breathed again freely, and became sensible. I looked round me, and saw all things in the same position as formerly. The corpse was still by my side, and my newly awakened horror made me struggle to rise. I succeeded so far as to lean upon my arm, whereby I removed

myself some space from the dead body. The rattling of the chains still continued, and I had the power of thinking so far, as to conjecture that efforts were being made to draw up the bell. But new incidents were now in progress. The air had revived Vanderhoek. I saw him stretching out his arms, as if to relieve his chest, which was heaving violently. He drew long inspirations, and struggled to turn himself on the seat. He succeeded, and I saw his face, which was dreadfully swollen, and of a dark livid colour. His eyes were wide open, and the light of life and returning vision seemed to be illumining them. The first perception he was conscious of was the vision of the corpse. His eye-balls turned, fixed upon it, and recoiled from it; and strange guttural sounds, with half-articulated words—"Shrecklich—shrecken!"—were wrung from him. He looked wildly around him, shuddered, and grasped convulsively the bench. Meanwhile, the rattling of the chains on the bell continued, and a sudden jerk almost precipitated me into the sea. The bell had clearly moved; the next moment it shook violently, from another effort to raise it; it appeared to me to revolve; another sudden jerk followed; it rose perceptibly; the water rushed in to fill up the void; the corpse of the woman whirled round in the eddy; and I saw Jenkins' body fall from the bench into the sea, and disappear.

Vanderhoek, who had now recovered his consciousness, uttered a loud cry as he saw his companion sink. The continued fresh air seemed to strengthen him far more rapidly than it did me, and I perceived that he now made violent struggles to lay hold of the mattock. He succeeded beyond my expectation; despair nerved his arm; he clutched the instrument, and rung three successive clangs on the side of the bell. These were probably unnecessary, as it was manifest now that those on the lighter were doing everything in their power to rescue us

from our perilous situation. The chains still clanked, and we had ascended perceptibly, though how far I had no means of ascertaining. There was another stoppage, the German sat with the instrument still in his hand, and his eye fixed on the body of the woman, which, from the continued whirling of the water, span round and round, as if it had been placed upon a pivot. After looking thus for a few moments, he started suddenly, then reaching up his hand, seized wildly another flask that hung near him, drained it to the bottom, and flung away the empty vessel. Some time passed before I felt any further motion upwards; and the large quantity of strong liquor that Vanderhoek had thrown into his still weak body, operated upon him with a quickness that surprised me. He began to get furious, talked incoherently, swung the iron mattock backwards and forwards, and sung stanzas of the "Zechlied." This was a new source of terror to me. He looked wildly at me as if he did not know who I was; swore the oaths of his country, in which the words "teufel, donner, blitzen," rang pre-eminently; used threats against me, as the cause of all that had occurred to him and his companion. Then he looked at the corpse, and, in a paroxysm of madness, struck the mattock into its white bosom, accompanying his action with wild oaths. I expected every moment that the next stroke would be on my own head, and sat in readiness to seize the weapon, and, if possible, debilitated as I was, to wrench it from his hands. My efforts to calm and pacify him were unavailing. I pointed to the side of the bell, and, in broken accents, for I could yet scarcely speak, told him to ring again; but he did not seem to understand; giving me wild looks, showering broken oaths upon me, and holding up the mattock in a threatening attitude, as if he would cleave my head in twain.

During all this painful period the air was regularly sup-

plied; but the efforts of those on the lighter had not been able to raise us further. In the midst of Vanderhoek's ravings, I thought I heard a sound above, unlike that of the apparatus by which the bell was wrought. It was a creaking, crashing sound, as if the bell were forcing up some heavy piece of wood with which it was encumbered. The thought struck me instantly that the cause of all our misfortunes lay in the drifting of some large piece of the wreck over the top of the bell, which had got entangled with the air-tubes and chain, and defied all the efforts of the workmen to raise us. The creaking sound continued, and, mixing with the whizzing of the air-tubes, the grating of the chain, and the roarings and yells of Vanderhoek, made the scene more dismal than it had yet been. I was in danger of my life—but momentarily redeemed, as it were, from the precincts of eternity—every minute, from the fierceness of the raving being beside me; and I could scarcely hope that all those protracted efforts of the workmen would ever raise us from the immense depth at which we were thus fixed by some great cause. I looked in the placid face of the corpse, and wished that I were as far removed as her spirit was from these complicated evils of the lower deep, and the scarcely less remediable ills of the upper world. But I was soon roused from my dark reverie: a louder crash than I had yet heard sounded over the bell, and produced such an effect upon the excited mind of Vanderhoek, that he roused his body suddenly, and struck a fierce blow at me with the iron instrument he still held in his hand. He had over-calculated his partially-recovered strength, and tumbled into the sea alongside of the corpse. I hesitated whether I should aid him in getting up. I saw him struggling and clinging by the garments of the body, which he tore—so tender was the material—into shreds. As his hold gave way, he clutched the body itself, which, sinking with his weight, disappeared,

leaving him to clamber for support round the lower part of the benches. I could not see him drown, though I shuddered at the danger which awaited me when he might recover his position. . At that very moment I distinctly felt the bell ascending; and a fierce whirling and boiling of the waters rushing into the void, would in an instant have sucked him down to rise no more, if I had not seized him by the bushy hair of the head. In that position I held him as firmly as my impaired strength would permit. The bell still ascended, and the buoying power of the water kept him swimming, and made him obey my slightest impulse. The submersion and the contact into which he had come with the corpse had manifestly removed the effects of the liquor, and his imploring eye was eloquent in its appeal to me to continue my grasp. This I did while the bell continued to ascend; the light began to increase in the yolks of glass; and the voices of the men in the lighter greeted my ear. In a moment afterwards, I saw the light of the sun shining red through the windows; in another moment the circle of bright effulgence between the bell and the sea met my enraptured eye. A loud cry of terror came from the workmen as they saw the body of Vanderhoek swimming in the sea. They ceased their process of raising; and swinging the bell to a side, some one got hold of the German, and I let go the grasp of his hair. Two or three more turns of the crane brought the bell on a level with the lighter. I sprung down upon the deck, and fell back in a swoon.

When I recovered, I saw several people standing round me, among whom there was an individual who claimed, for a time, my undivided gaze. He was a tall, handsome individual, dressed in deep mournings. He had a white pocket handkerchief in his hands, which he applied frequently to his eyes; and he looked at me anxiously as he saw me recovering from the effects of the syncope into

which I had fallen. He was proceeding to put some questions to me, when Mr. W—— interfered, and stated that I ought to be allowed time to collect my energies before my mind was led again into the subject of what I had suffered during the time we were in the deep. I was, accordingly, assisted on shore; and, having been put to bed, slept for several hours so soundly that I do not think a single image of what I had seen and heard during that dismal scene occurred to my fancy; but, when in the act of wakening, a confused influx of ideas, all derived from the source of my sufferings, rushed into my mind, and for a few minutes I conceived that I was still in the bell, that I heard the sound of the air tubes, saw Jenkins fall, the corpse lying beside me, Vanderhoek hanging by my grasp of his hair, and all the minutiæ of horrors that then encompassed me; a commotion which comes over me often yet, like a species of monomania, when I will start up, and cling to the bedposts, and scream for terror. It being known that I was awake, Mr. W—— and the stranger came to me. It was their object to get an account of all that had occurred during my descent. I gave it as nearly as I could recollect, and, when I came to describe the appearance and figure of the corpse of the female, I saw the stranger change colour, his frame trembled, his lips turned pale, and he rose and walked through the room as if afraid to listen to my narrative.

"What means this?" said I to Mr. W——, in a low tone.

"The female whose body you saw in the bell," he replied, "was the wife of Mr. G——. He stands before you. He was saved from the wreck, and she perished."

"Good God! and I have already given a part of the shocking detail," I responded.

The stranger heard me, as he paced the room, returned, and sat down by my bedside.

"I am not satisfied that it was my Agnes," he exclaimed, in broken accents, while the tears flowed over his cheeks. "There was a waiting-maid along with us—describe her more particularly. *I can listen.*"

As he uttered these words, I could perceive that he contracted his nerves, his hands were clenched, and over his frame there passed a shiver that seemed to mock the resolution to confirm the mind by a mere physical action. I proceeded to give a fuller account of her dress and earring, the character of her face and figure, so far as I could discover them. Every word seemed to enter his very soul. He turned round again. There was something he wished to say, but he hesitated, trembled, and stammered.

"Was that fair form mutilated?" he asked, at length. "O God! I picture my Agnes torn by monsters of the deep, and hideous urchins resting on her bosom. Yet, why do I ask knowledge that must sit for ever on my heart, and engender visions that in the hours of night must torture my soul, to the end of my pilgrimage in this dark world?"

I hesitated to say more; the orbless socket—the torn stump of the arm—the limpets that clung to her skin—the bosom pierced by Vanderhoek's mattock, were all before me, and shook my soul. But why should I have added an artificial misery to wretchedness like his? I would not dwell on the subject. The stranger imputed my disinclination to satisfy his morbid desire for information to its true cause. A paroxysm of sorrow seized him. He rose suddenly, took his hat, and, covering his pallid face with his handkerchief, rushed out of the room. How often have I thought of that individual! I never saw him again; but his image is for ever associated with the vision of that corpse, shining in the sickly green hue of the medium in which it lay. The body was never found; he never saw it. And was it not well for him? What would have been his

agony, to have seen the beloved of his bosom as I saw her, to have treasured up in his mind the lineaments of that face, the harrowing minutiæ of her mutilated form?

I got an account from Mr. W—— of what took place on board of the lighter while the bell was down. It was a long time, he said, before anything was suspected to be wrong, as the men often remain down for an hour without a single signal coming from them. The difficulty of working the air-pumps first roused their suspicions; and when they found that the bell would not respond to the action of the crane, they knew at once that it had got fixed among some part of the wreck. I need not detail their efforts to relieve us; they are possessed of no interest; the result is known; but who shall know, as I experienced, the horrors of that period?"

My patient, when he had finished his narrative, put his hand over his eyes, and shuddered. I could do little for an individual thus situated; but I visited him often, more with a view to the benefit of science, than from any hope of rescuing him from the dominion of the power he had, like Frankenstein, created, to satisfy a diseased craving of the mind, and trembled at after it was formed, as he found himself helpless and weak in his energies to exorcise it. The continued brooding of his sick fancy over all the strange forms he had seen, produced, in a still greater degree, a weakness of the mind itself, that is, a weakness as regards the sane condition of the mind; for his imagination, drawing a morbid *pabulum* from his disease, grew stronger and stronger in its capacity to invest the images he gloated over with more fearful characteristics, till often, as I was informed, he started up in the middle of the night and screamed out that he was in the present act of suffering again all he had already experienced. But what struck me as still more remarkable in this victim, was, that any change that took place upon him for the

better, in respect of his physical economy, was, while accompanied by a partial release from the domination of his old fancies, generally attended by a kind of new-born desire for another and a new supply of his stimulant visions. This discovery I made one day, when, as I felicitated myself on having effected a confirmation of his nerves, by the application of a course of tonics, I told him that I myself was on the eve of encountering all the unpleasant feelings attendant upon the performance of a painful operation on a very beautiful patient, whose life might too likely fall a sacrifice to her desire to get quit of a mortal disease. His eye brightened, he held out his hands, and supplicated me to allow him to be present, under the assumed character of a surgeon. My refusal produced disappointment and chagrin; and he often afterwards harped on the cruelty of my resolution to discomfit him. He afterwards went to another part of the country to reside with his relations; and the last notice I had of him was, that he was seen bending his skeleton body over the blackened corpses of several individuals who had been burnt to death in the conflagration of a large dwelling-house in the town where he resided

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WILLIE SMITH.

If I thocht the world would tak the least interest in the matter, I wad tell it the where an' the when o' my birth, in conformity wi' auld use an' wont in the case o' biographical sketches; but, takin it for granted that the world cares as little about me as I care about it—an', Gude kens, that's little aneuch, thanks to the industry o' my faither, that made me independent o't!—I shall merely say, wi' regard to the particulars above alluded to, that I was born in a certain thrivin, populous bit touny in the south, an' that I am, at this present writin, somewhat aulder than I was yesterday. I dinna choose to be mair particular on the point, because I dinna see that my age has onything mair to do wi' my story, than the ages o' witnesses hae wi' their evidence. Bein born in the usual way, in the usual way was I christened—(*Anglice*, baptised); but hereon hangs a tale, or rather a dizzen o' them. My faither's name was Willie Smith, my paternal grandfather's name was Willie Smith, I had an uncle whase name was Willie Smith, an' twa cousins whase names were Willie Smith; an' it was determined that I should be a Willie Smith too, in order, I suppose, to mak sure o' perpetuatin that very rare an' euphonious family name. But, oh, that they had ca'ed me Nebuchadnezzar, or Fynmackowl, or Chrononhotonthologos, or ony name in the sma'est degree distinctive, an' no that confounded ane, that seems to me to belang to every third man I meet. It wad hae saved me a world o' misery, an' disappointment, an' suffering o' a' sorts. It's just incredible the mischief that simple circumstance has wrought me—I mean, the ca'in me Willie Smith. It may appear, I dare

say, a harmless aneuch thing to you, guid reader, but, my feth, ca' ye yersel Willie Smith just for ae twelvemonth, an' ye'll find it's nae such joke as ye may think, especially if there be half-a-dizzen o' Willie Smiths leevin in the same street wi' ye; whilk is a' but certain to be the case, gang to where ye like. I ken I could never get oot o' their neighbourhood, an' mony a shift an' change I hae made for that express purpose. I maun confess, however, that the name's no a'thegither without its advantages. Mony a scrape I hae got skaithless oot o', when I was a boy, in consequence o' its frequency. In the first schule I was at, there war three Willie Smiths, besides me, an' it was thus almost impossible, in many cases, to ascertain which was the real delinquent when mischief had been perpetrated; an' the result was, that the wrang Willie Smith was as often punished as the right ane; but as I, of course, was frequently in the former predicament, I am no sure that, if the account were fairly balanced, I wad be found to hae been a great gainer after a'. Latterly, however, I certainly was not; for the maister, finding the difficulty o' distinguishing between the Smiths, an' that the course o' justice was thus interrupted, at last adopted the sure plan o' whippin a' the Willie Smiths thegither, whenever any one o' the unfortunate name was charged wi' ony transgression. We were thus incorporated, as it were, rolled into one, and dealt wi' accordingly, in a' cases o' punishment.

My schule days owre, I began the world in the capacity o' shopman to my faither, wha was a hosier to business, and carried on a sma', but canny trade in that line. He wasna to ca' wealthy, but he was in easy aneuch circumstances, an' had laid by a trifle, which was intended for me, his only son an' heir. I was now in my twentieth year, the heyday of youth; an', why should I hesitate to say it, a sensible, judicious, well-meanin, an' good-lookin lad, but

(I hesitate to say this, though) wi' a great deal mair sentiment in my nature than was at a' necessary for a hosier. How I had come by it, Heaven knows; but so it was. I was fu' o' romance, an' fine feelin, an' a' that sort o' thing, an' wi' a heart most annoyingly susceptible o' the tender passion. It was just like tinder, as somebody has said—I think it was Burns—catched fire in an instant. For some time, however, as is the case with most youths, I dare say, my love was general, and was pretty equally divided amongst *all* the young and good-lookin o' the other sex whom I happened to see or meet wi'; but it at length concentrated, an' dwelt on one object alone—(this was a case o' love at first sicht)—a beautiful an' amiable girl, wha attended the same kirk in which I sat. I hadna the slightest personal acquaintance wi' her, nor ony access to her society; but this didna hinder me adorin her in my secret heart, nor prevent me puttin doon stockins to customers when they asked for nightcaps. In short, before I kent whar I was, I was plump owre head an' ears in love, distractin love, wi' my fair enslaver, an' rendered useless baith to mysel an' every ither body. Never did the tender passion so engross, so absorb the feelins an' faculties o' a human bein, as it did those o' me, Willie Smith the hosier, on this occasion. I was absolutely beside mysel, an' felt as if livin and breathin in a world o' my ain. This continued for several months; an' yet, durin all that time, I had remained content wi' worshippin the object o' my adoration at a distance, an' that only on Sundays, for I rarely saw her through the week. Whan I said, however, that I was content wi' this state o' matters, I am no sure that I hae said precisely what was true. Had I said that I lacked courage to mak ony nearer advances, I wad, perhaps, hae expressed mysel fully mair correctly. This was, in fact, the case; I couldna muster fortitude aneuch to break the ice, an' yet I didna want encouragement either. My fair captivator soon

discovered the state o' my feelins regardin her, as she couldna but do, for my een war never aff her, an' my looks war charged wi' an expression that was easily aneuch interpreted. She therefore—at least I thocht sae—kent perfectly weel how the laun lay; an' if I didna mak a guid use o' the impression I had made in my turn—for this I thocht I saw too in sundry little nameless things—the faut was my ain, as I didna want such encouragement as a modest and virtuous girl could, under the circumstances, haud oot to a lover. She looked wi' an interest on me, which she couldna conceal whanever we met, an' I frequently detected the corner o' her bright blue eye turned towards me in the kirk. Often, also, have I seen her sittin in melancholy abstraction when she should hae been listenin to the minister; but could *I* blame her, whan she was thinkin o' me? Of *that*, from all I could see an' mark, I was satisfied.

At length, unable to endure the distraction o' my feelins langer, and encouraged by the wee symptoms o' reciprocal affection which I had marked in my enslaver, assurin me o' my bein on pretty safe ground, I cam to the desperate resolution o' makin a decisive move in the business. I resolved to *write* my beloved; to confess my passion, and to beg that she would allow me to introduce myself to her. This resolution, however, I fand it much easier to adopt than to execute. There was a faint-heartedness aboot me that I couldna get the better o'; and a score o' sheets o' paper perished in the attempts I made to concoct something suitable to the occasion. At length, I succeeded; that is, I accomplished such a letter as I felt convinced I couldna surpass, although I wrought at it for a twelvemonth.

Havin faulded this letter, which I did wi' a tremblin hand and palpitatin heart, I clapt it into my pocket-book, whar it lay for three days, for want o' courage to dispatch it, and, in some sort, for want o' opportunity too; for if I

sent it by the post, there was a danger o't fa'in into the hands o' Lizzy's faither—Lizzy Barton bein the name o' my enthraller; and there was naebody else that I could think o' employin in the business. At length, however, I determined to dispatch it at a' hazards. There was a wee bit ragged, smart, intelligent laddie, that used to be constantly playing at bools aboot oor shop-door, and whom we sometimes sent on bits o' sma' messages through the toun; and on him I determined to devolve the important mission of deliverin my letter. Accordingly, ae day when my faither was oot, and naebody in the shop but mysel—

"Jock," cried I, waggin the boy in, "come here a minnit." Jock instantly leaped to his feet—for he was on his knees, most earnestly engaged in plunkin, at the moment—and, crammin a handfu o' bools into his pocket, was, in a twinklin, before me; when, wipin his nose wi' the sleeve o' his jacket, and looking up in my face as he spoke—

"What's yer wull, sir?" said Jock.

"Do ye ken Mr. Barton's, Jock?" said I.

"Brawly, sir," replied Jock.

"Weel, Jock, my man," continued I, but wi' a degree o' trepidation that I had great difficulty in concealin frae the boy, "tak this letter, and go to Mr. Barton's wi't, and rap canny at the door, and ask if Miss Barton's in. If she's in, ask a word o' her; and, when she comes, slip this letter into her haun. If she's no in, bring back the letter to me, and let naebody see't. Mind it's for *Miss Barton*, Jock, and nae ane else. Sae ye maunna be paveein't aboot, but keep it carefully hidden under yer jacket, till ye see Miss Barton hersel; then whup it oot, and slip it into her hand that way;"—and here I fugled the proper motion to Jock. "Noo, Jock," I continued, "if ye go through this job correctly and cleverly, I'll gie ye a saxpence." Jock's eyes glistened wi' delight at the magnificence o' the

promised reward, so far transcendin what he had been accustomed to receive. He wad hae thocht himsel handsomely paid wi' a ha'penny, and wad hae run sax miles ony day for a penny.

Having dispatched Jock, after seein the letter carefully buttoned up inside his jacket, I waited his return wi' a painfulness o' suspense, and intensity o' feelin, that I wad rather leave to the reader's imagination, than attempt to describe. It was most distressin—most agitatin. At length, Jock appeared—I mean in the distance. My heart began to beat violently. He bounced into the shop; my trepidation became excessive; my knees trembled; my lips grew as white as paper; I could hardly speak. At last—

"Jock," said I, wi' a great effort, "did ye see her?"

"Yes," said Jock, "and I gied her the letter."

"And what did she say?"

"She asked wha it was frae."

"And ye tell't her?"

"Ay."

"And what did she say then?"

"She just leugh, pleased-like; and her face grew red, and she stappit it in her bosom, and said, 'Vera weel, my man:' and syne shut the door."

Oh, what pen could describe the feelins o' joy, o' transport, that were mine at this ecstatic moment! She had smiled wi' delight on hearin my name; she had blushed when my letter was put into her hands; and she had put that letter—oh, delicious thought!—into her bosom. The proof o' her love was conclusive. There was nae mistakin what were her feelins towards me. Jock's artless tale had put that beyond a' doot. I was noo put nearly distracted wi' joy. But, if the merely gracious reception of my letter was capable o' inspirin me wi' this feelin, what degree o' happiness could be imparted by a reply to it, and that o' the most favourable kind? (It could be ascer-

tained by the Rule o' Three.) That degree o' happiness, whatever it is, was bestowed on me. In the course of the ensuing day, I received the following sweet billet by the postman, written by Lizzy's own dear hand:—

"Miss Barton presents her compliments to Mr. Smith, and will be happy of his company to tea, to-morrow evening, at six o'clock."

Oh, hoo I noo langed for the "to-morrow evenin at six o'clock!" And yet I trembled at its approach, wi' an undefined, but overwhelmin feelin o' mingled love and shame, and hope and fear. It was just what I may ca' a delightfully painfu' predicament. Regardless, however, o' my feelins, the appointed hour cam round, and whan it did, it saw me dressed in my best, and, wi' a flutterin heart, stan'in at Lizzy's faither's door, wi' the knocker in my hand. I knocked. I heard a movement o' the sneck behind. The door opened, and my angel stood before me. I smiled and blushed intensely, without sayin a word. Miss Barton stared at me wi' a look o' cauld composed surprise. At length—

"Miss Barton," I stammered oot, "I am come, according to your invitation, to"——

"My invitation, sir!" said Miss Barton, noo a little confused, an' blushin in her turn. "What invitation? I haena the pleasure o' ony acquaintance wi' ye, sir. Ye're a perfect stranger to me."

"I houp no a'thegither, Miss Barton," replied I, makin an abortive attempt at a captivatin smile. "I took the liberty o' addressin a letter to ye yesterday; an' here's yer invitation on the back o't," continued I, an' noo puttin her ain card into her hands. The puir lassie looked confounded, an', in great agitation, said—

"Oh, sir, it's a mistak! I'm so sorry. It's an entire mistak on my part. Yer'e no the person at a' I meant. I thocht the letter was frae anither gentleman—a different

person a'thegither. It's the name has misled me. I am really so sorry." An' she curtsied politely to me, an' shut the door.

Ay, here, then, was a pretty dooncome to a' my air-built castles o' luve an' happiness! It was a mistak, was it?—a mistak? I wasna the person at a'! She thocht the letter was frae anither gentleman a'thegither! An', pray, wha was this gentleman? A' that, an' a deal mair, I subsequently fand oot. The gentleman was a certain Willie Smith—a young, guid-lookin fallow, who sat in the same kirk wi' us, an' between whom an' Lizzy there had lang existed the telegraphic correspondence o' looks an' smiles, an' sighs, an' blushes—in fact, just such a correspondence as I had carried on mysel, wi' this important difference, however, that it wasna a' on ae side, as it noo appeared it had been in my case. The other Willie Smith's returns were real, while mine were only imaginary. I needna enlarge on the subject o' my feelins under this grievous an' heart-rendin disappointment. It will be aneuch to say that it pat me nearly beside mysel, an' that it was amaist a hale week before I tasted a morsel o' food o' ony kind. I was in a sad state; but time, that cures a' ills, at length cured mine, too, although it didna remove my regret that a name so unhappily frequent as Willie Smith had ever been bestowed on me.

Havin already described mysel as bein o' a susceptible nature, and bein at this time in the prime o' youth, it winna surprise the reader to learn that I soon after this fell in love a second time. The object o' my affections, on this occasion, was a pretty girl, whom I met wi' at the house o' a mutual freen. She was a stranger in oor toun, an' had come frae Glasgow—o' which city she was a native—on a short visit to a relation. The acquaintance which I formed wi' this amiable creature soon ripened into the most ardent affection, an' I had every reason, very early, to believe that

my love was returned. The subsequent progress of our intimacy established the delightful fact. We eventually stood on the footin o' avowed, an' all but absolutely betrothed lovers. Soon after this, Lucy Craig, which was the name of my beloved, returned to Glasgow, but not before we had settled to maintain a close and regular correspondence.

The correspondence wi' Lucy, to which I hae alluded, subsequently took place; an', for several months—durin which I had made, besides, twa or three runs to Glasgow, to see her—mony a sweet epistle passed between us—epistles fu' o' lowin love, an' sparklin hopes, an' joy. I may as weel here remark, too, that, on the occasions o' my visits to Lucy, I was maist cordially an' kindly received by her mother—a fine, decent, motherly body, an' a widow—Lucy's father havin died several years before. Aweel, as I said, our correspondence went on closely an' uninterruptedly; but I maun noo add, wi' a restriction as to time, an' say for aboot five months, at the end o' which time it suddenly ceased, on the pairt o' Lucy, a'thegither. She was due me a letter at the time; for I had written three close on the back o' each other, which were yet unanswered. In the greatest impatience an' uneasiness, I first waited ae week, an' then anither, an' anither, an' anither, till they ran up to aboot six, whan, unable langer to thole the misery which her seemin negligence, or it micht be something waur, had created, I determined on puttin my fit in the coach, an' gaun slap richt through mysel, to ascertain the cause o' her extraordinary silence. To this proceedin—that is, my gaun to Glasgow—I was further induced by anither circumstance. There was a mercantile hoose there, wi' which my faither had dealt for twenty years, an' which had gotten, frae first to last, mony a thoosan pounds o' his money—a' weel an' punctually paid. Noo, it happened that, twa or three days before this, my faither had dispatched an order

to this house for a fresh supply o' guids, whan, to oor inexpressible amazement, we received, instead o' the guids, a letter plumply refusin ony further credit, an' demandin, under a threat o' immediate prosecution, payment o' oor current account—amountin to aboot £150. To us this was a most extraordinary affair, an' wholly inexplicable, an' we resolved to know what it meant, by personal application to the firm. This, then, was anither purpose I had to serve in gaun to Glasgow, to which I accordingly set out, wi' the folks hunner-an'-fifty pounds in my pocket.

On arrivin in the city just named, my first ca', of course, was on Lucy. But this wasna accomplished withoot a great deal o' previous painfu feelin. It was twa or three minutes before I could rap. At length I raised the knocker, an' struck. Lucy opened the door. She stared wildly at me, for a second, an' then, utterin a scream, ran into the house, exclaimin, distractedly—"O James, James! mother, mother! here's Mr. Smith's ghost!" And she screamed again more loudly than ever, an' flung herself on the sofa, in a violent fit o' hysterics.

Here, then, was a pretty reception. I was confounded, but stepped leisurely into the hoose, after Lucy, whom I found extended on the sofa, an' her mother an' a strange gentleman beside her—a stranger to me at least—endeavouring to soothe her, and calm her violence. On the mother, my presence seemed to hae nearly as extraordinary an effect as on the dochter. Whan I entered the room, she, too, set up a skirl, and fled as far back frae me as the apartment wad admit, exclaimin—

"Lord be aboot us, Mr. Smith! is that you? Can it be possible? Are ye in the body, or are ye but a wanderin spirit? Lord hae a care o' us, are ye really an' truly leevin, Mr. Smith?"

"Guid folks," said I, as calmly as I could, in reply to this strange rhapsody, "will ye be sae kind as tell me what

a' this means?" An' first I looked at the dochter, wha was still lyin on the sofa, wi' her face buried wi' fricht in the cushions, and then at the mother, wha was sittin in a chair, starin at me, an' gaspin for breath, but noo evidently satisfied that I was at least nae ghaist.

"Means, Mr. Smith!" said she, at intervals, as she could get breath to speak; "oh, man, didna we hear that ye were dead! Haena we thocht that ye were in yer grave for this month past! Dear me, but this is extraordinar! But will ye just step this way wi' me a minnit." An' she led the way into another room, whither I followed her, in the hope o' getting an explanation o' the singular scene which had just taken place; an' this explanation I did get. On our entering the apartment, my conductress shut the door, an', desirin me to tak a seat, thus began—"Dear me, Mr. Smith, but this is a most extraordinar, an' I maun say, a most unlucky affair. Werena we tell't, a month ago, that ye were dead an' buried, an' that by mair than ane—ay an' by the carrier frae yer ain place, too, at whom Lucy made inquiry the moment we heard it? An', mair than a' that," continued Mrs. Craig, "here's yer death mentioned in ane o' the newspapers o' yer ain place." Saying this, she took an auld newspaper frae a shelf, an', after lookin for the place to which she wanted to direct my attention, put it into my hands, wi' her thoom on the following piece o' intelligence:—"Died, on the 16th current, at his father's house, ——, Mr. William Smith, in the 23d year of his age."

"Noo, Mr. Smith," said Mrs. Craig, triumphantly, "what were we to think o' a' this, but that ye were really an' truly buried? The place, yer name, yer age, a' richt to a tittle. What else could we think?"

"Indeed, Mrs. Craig," said I, smilin, "it is an odd business, an' I dinna wunnur at yer bein deceived; but it's a' easily aneuch explained. It's this confounded name

o' mine that's at the bottom o' a' the mischief. The Willie Smith here mentioned, I need hardly say, I suppose, is no me; but I kent him weel aneuch, an' a decent lad he was —he just lived twa or three doors frae us; an', as to the carrier misleadin ye, I dinna wunnur at that either—for he wad naturally think ye were inquirin after the deceased. But there's nae harm dune, Mrs. Craig," continued I.

"I'm no sure o' that," interrupted my hostess, wi' a look an' expression o' voice that rather took me aback, as indeed, had also the *triumphant* manner in which she had appealed to me if they could be blamed for havin believed me dead. This she was aye pressin on me, an' I was rather surprised at it; but it was to be fully accounted for.

"No!" said I, whan Mrs. Craig expressed her uncertainty as to there bein ony mischief dune; "isna there Lucy to the fore, lookin as weel an' as healthy as ever I saw her, an' "——

"Lucy's married!" interposed Mrs. Craig, firmly and solemnly.

"Married!" exclaimed I, starting frae my seat, in horror an' amazement—"Lucy married!"

"'Deed is she, Mr. Smith, an' yon was her husband ye saw; an' ye canna blame her, puir thing! I'm sure mony a sair heart she had after ye. I thocht she wad hae gratten her een oot; but, bein sure ye were dead, an' a guid offer comin in the way, ye ken, she couldna refuse't. It wad hae been the heicht o' imprudence. Sae she juist dried her een, puir thing, an' buckled to."

"Exactly, Mrs. Craig—exactly," said I, here interruptin her; "I understan ye—ye need sae nae mair." An' I rushed oot o' the door like a madman, an' through the streets, withoot kennin either what I was doin or whar I was gaun. On recovering my composure a little, I fand mysel in the Green o' Glasgow, an' close by the river side. The clear, calm, deep water tempted me, in the desperation

o' my thochts. Ae plunge, an' a' this distractin turmoil that was rackin my soul, an' tearin my bosom asunder, wad be stilled. In this frame o' mind, I gazed gloomily on the glidin stream; but, as I gazed, better thochts gradually presented themsels, an' finally, resentment took the place o' despondency, whan I reflected on the heartless haste o' Lucy to wed anither, thereby convincin me that, in losin her, my loss was by nae means great. So then, to mak a lang story short, in place o' jumpin into the Clyde, I hied me to a tavern, ate as hearty a supper as ever I ate in my life, drank a guid, steeve tumbler o' toddy, tumbled into bed, sleepit as sound as a caterpillar in winter, an' awoke next mornin as fresh as a daisy an' as licht as a lark, free frae a' concern aboot Lucy, an' perfectly satisfied that I had acted quite richt in no droonin mysel on the previous nicht.

Havin noo got quit o' my love affairs, my first business, next day, was to ca' on the mercantile firm alluded to in another part o' the narrative; and to their countin-hoose I accordingly directed my steps—and thae steps, when I entered their premises, were a wee haughty, for I felt at once the strength o' the money in my pouch, and a sense o' havin been ill-used by them. On enterin the countin-hoose, I fand the principal there alane, seated at a desk.

This gentleman I knew personally, and he kent me too; for I had frequently ca'ed at his office in the way o' business, and on these occasions he had aye come forrit to me wi' extended hand and a smilin countenance. On the present, however, he did naething o' the kind, He sat still, and, lookin sternly at me as I approached him—

"Well, Mr. Smith," he said, "are ye come to settle that account? Short accounts make long friends, you know," he added, but wi' a sort o' ferocious smile, if there be such a thing.

"I wad like first to ken, sir," I replied, "what was the

meanin o' yer writin us sic a letter as we had frae ye the ither day?"

"Why, Mr. Smith," said Mr. Drysdale, which was the gentleman's name, "under the peculiar circumstances of the case, I don't see there was anything in that letter that ought to have surprised you. It was a perfectly natural and reasonable effort on our part to recover our own."

"A reasonable effort, sir, to recover your own!" said I indignantly. "What do you mean? My faither has dealt wi' ye these twenty years, and I don't suppose ye ever fand it necessary to mak ony effort to recover your money oot o' his hands. I rather think ye were aye paid withoot askin."

"Oh, yes, yes," replied Mr. Drysdale, doggedly; "but I repeat that recent circumstances have altered the case materially."

"What circumstances do ye allude to, sir?" said I, wi' increasin passion.

"What circumstances, sir, do I allude to?" replied Mr. Drysdale, fiercely. "I don't suppose you required to come here for that information; but you shall have it nevertheless, since you ask it." And, proceeding to a file of newspapers, he detached one, and, throwing it on the desk before me, placed his finger, as Mrs. Craig had done on another occasion, on the bankrupt list, and desired me to look at *that*. I did so, and read, in this catalogue of unfortunates, the name of "William Smith, merchant, ——. Creditors to meet," &c. &c.

"Now, sir," said Mr. Drysdale, with a triumphant sneer, "are you satisfied?"

"Perfectly, sir," I replied; "but you will please to observe that that William Smith is not my father. He's a totally different person."

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Drysdale, "not your father! Who is he, then? I didn't know there was any other

William Smith, of any note in trade, in your town. I did not, indeed, look particularly at the designation; but took it for granted it was your father, as, to my certain knowledge, many others have also done."

"Indeed!" replied I; "why, that is mair serious. Some steps maun be taen to remedy that mischief."

"Without a moment's delay," said Mr. Drysdale, who was already a changed man. "Your father must advertise directly, saying he's not the William Smith whose name appears in the bankrupt list of such a date. Lose not a moment in doing this, or your credit'll be cracked throughout the three kingdoms. It has already suffered seriously here, I can assure you."

Having paid Mr. Drysdale his account, which he wasna noo for acceptin—sayin that, if we had the sma'est occasion for the money, to use it freely, without regardin them—and havin thanked him for his advice as to counteracting the evil report that had gane abroad respectin us, I hurried awa to put it in execution; and thinkin it very hard to be subjected to a' this trouble sae innocently, and to hae, at ane and the same time, a pair o' such calamities sae oddly thrust upon me, as my ain death, and the bankruptcy o' my faither. However, sae it was. But my business noo was to remedy, as far as possible, the mischief that had been done by the unfounded rumour o' oor insolvency. Wi' this view I hastened awa to a newspaper office, to begin the cure by an advertisement; and, in doin this, I had occasion to pass the coach-office whar I had landed the day before. Observin the place, I thocht I micht as weel step in and secure my ticket for the following day, when it was my intention to return hame. Accordingly, into the office I gaed; and, whan I did sae, I fand the clerk in earnest conversation wi' twa men, ane o' whom was busily employed in lookin owre the way-book or register o' passengers' names. They didna at first observe me enter;

but, whan they did, there was an instant pause in their conversation; and I observed the clerk, after he had glanced at me, tippin a significant wink to ane, and gently punchin the other wi' his elbow. Then a' three glanced at me. I couldna understand it. However, I said nothing; thinkin they were settlin some private business thegither, and, oot o' guid nature, wad rather wait a minute or twa than interrupt them. But my waiting wasna lang. Before I had been an instant in the office, ane o' the men cam roun to whar I was stan'in, and, lookin me fiercely in the face, said—

"What's your name, sir, if you please?"

"My name, sir!" replied I, as angrily—for I thocht the fellow put the question in a very impertinent sort o' way —"what business hae ye wi' my name?"

"Oh, mair than ye're aware o', p'raps," says he. "An' it's a bad sign o' a man whan he'll no tell his name," says he. This touched me to the quick, an' I dare say the vagabond kent it wad, an' did it on purpose. It was a wipe at my character which I could by nae means submit to. So says I to him, says I—

"Freen, ye'll observe that I'm no denyin my name—I'm only disputin yer richt to demand it. I'm no ashamed o' my name, sir, although it certainly has cost me some trouble in my day. My name, sir, is William Smith—sae mak o't what ye like."

"I should mak a couple o' guineas o't, at the very least," said the fellow, wi' a smile; and at the same time catchin me by the breast o' my coat, and sayin that I was his prisoner.

"Prisoner!" exclaimed I, in amazement, "prisoner! what do you mean?"

"I mean just exactly what I say," said the fellow, quite coolly; and, thinkin he saw in me some show o' a spirit o' resistance, whilk there really was, he touched me wi' a bit thing like a wean's whistle, and winked to his neebor to

come to his assistance, which the latter immediately did, and catched me by the ither breast o' my coat.

"Come along," said baith, now beginnin to drag me wi' them.

"No a fit," said I, resistin, "till I ken what for I'm used this way."

"Oh! ye don't know, Mr. Innocence!" said the fellow wha first took haud o' me; "not you—you're amazed, an't you? You can't suppose there's such a thing as fugæ warrants out against you! And you can't believe I should have such a thing in my pocket," added the scoonril, takin' a piece o' paper oot o' his pouch, and haudin't up before my een, but oot o' my reach. "There, my lad, are you satisfied now? That's the thing I walks by."

Then, havin replaced the paper in his pouch, he went on, but now, apparently, more for the information of the bystanders (of whom there was, by this time, a considerable number gathered together), than for mine.

"You're apprehended, Mr. Smith, by virtue of a fugæ warrant, obtained at the instance of Messrs. Hodgson, Brothers, & Co., on the evidence of two credible witnesses —namely, Robert Smart and Henry Allan—who have deponed that you were going beyond seas; you being indebted to the said Hodgson, Brothers, & Co., in the sum of £74. 15s. 9d. sterling money. There's cause and ground for yer apprehension, Mr. Smith," continued the fellow; so, no more about it, but come along quietly, and at once, or it may be worse for you."

"I'll see you shot first," said I. "I ken naething aboot your Hodgson, Brothers—never heard o' them before. I owe them nae money, nor onybody else, but what I can pay; and I haena, nor ever had, ony intention whatever o' leavin my ain country."

"A' quite natural statements these, Mr. Smith, "said

the man wha first took haud o' me; "but ye'll observe we're no bound to believe them. All that we have to do, is to execute our duty. If you are wronged, you may have your redress by legal process. In the meantime, ye go with us." And again the two commenced draggin me oot o' the office.

"May I be hanged if I do, then!" said I, passionately; for my blood was noo gettin up. It wad hae been far better for me, in the end, if I had taen things calmly—for I could easily hae proven my identity, and, of course, the messengers' error in apprehendin me; but my prudence and patience baith gave way before the strong feelin o' resentment, which a sense o' the injustice I was sufferin had excited.

"May I be hanged if I do, then!" said I; and wi' that I hit ane o' the fellows a wap on the face that sent him staggerin to the other side o' the office. Havin done this, I turned roun', quick as thocht, and collared the ane that still held by me, a proceedin which was immediately followed by a wrestle o' the most ferocious and determined character. I was the stouter man o' the twa, however, and wad sune hae laid my antagonist on the breadth o' his back, but for his neebor, who, now rendered furious by the blow which I had gien him, sprang on me like a tiger; and, between them I was borne to the groun', the twa fa'in on the tap o' me. Here, again, however, the battle was renewed. I continued to kick and box richt and left, wi' a vigour that made me still formidable to my enemies; while they, to do them justice, lent me kicks and blows in return, that nearly ca'ed the life out o' me. There, then, were we a' three rowin on the floor, sometimes ane uppermost an' sometimes anither, wi' oor faces streamin o' blude, and oor coats a' torn in the most ruinous manner. It was an awfu' scene, and such a ane as hadna been seen often in that office before, I dare say. As micht be expected,

we had a numerous audience, too The office was filled wi' folk, the door was choked up wi' them, and there was an immense crowd in the street, and clusters at the window, a' tryin to get a sicht or a knowledge o' what was proceedin within. Baith the commotion and the concourse, in fact, was tremendous—just appallin to look at. But this was a state o' matters that couldna last lang. My assailants havin ca'ed in the assistance o' a couple o' great, big, stout fallows o' porters, I was finally pinned to the floor, whan my hauns bein secured by a pair o' handcuffs, I was raised to my feet, again collared by the twa officers, and a cry havin been made to clear the road, I was led oot o' the office in procession; a messenger on each side o' me, the twa porters ahint, and ane before, openin a passage through the crowd, whose remarks, as I gaed alang, were highly flatterin to me:—

"What an awfu'-like ruffian!" said ane. "What a murderous-lookin scoonril!" said anither.

"What's he been doin?" inquired a third.

"Robbin the mail-coach," answered a fourth; "and they say he has murdered the guard an' twa passengers."

"Oh! the monster!" exclaimed an auld wife, whom this piece of accurate information had reached; "the savage, bloody monster! Was ever the like heard tell o'! The gallows is owre guid for him."

In short, I heard mysel, as I was led alang, charged wi' every crime that human wickedness is capable o', although I perceived that the robbery o' the mail, and the murders o' the guard and passengers, was the favourite and prevailing notion; a notion which, I presumed, had arisen frae the circumstance o' the row's havin had its origin in a coach office. Some reports hae been waur founded. As to the reflections on my appearance, I couldna reasonably quarrel wi' them; for, really, it was far frae bein prepossessin; and o' this I was quite sensible. My coat was

hingin in tatters aboot me; my hat was crushed oot o' a' shape; and my face was hideously disfigured wi' blude, and wi' unnatural swellins frae the blows I had gotten.

Wi' the reflections on my appearance, then, as I hae said, greatly improved as it was by the display o' my handcuffs, I couldna justly fin' faut. By-and-by, however, we reached the jail; and into ane o' its strongest and best secured apartments was I immediately conducted. Havin seen me fairly lodged here, my captors took their leave o' me; ane o' them sayin, as he quitted the cell, and shakin his head as he spoke—

"If ye don't rue this job, friend, my name's not what it is—that's all."

The door bein noo closed on me, an' a fine opportunity bein thus presented me for indulgin in a little reflection on my present circumstances an' situation, I accordingly began to do so; but I fand it by nae means a very agreeable employment. Amang ither things, it struck me that I had exposed mysel' sadly, and very unnecessarily, since I could easily, as I believe I hae before remarked, hae shown that they had put the saddle on the wrong horse; but I had allowed my passion to get the better o' me, an' instead o' takin the richt and prudent course o' establishin this by a quiet procedure, had resisted, an' foucht like a thief taen in the fact. However, the business was noo hoo to mend the matter, an' it was some time before I could discover precisely hoo this was to be done—at least wi' a' that expedition I wad hae liked. At last it struck me that I couldna do better than intimate my situation to Mr. Drysdale, an' request o' him to come an' see me. This, then, I immediately did—the jailor furnishin me wi' paper, pen, an' ink, an' undertakin to have my letter delivered as directed, which was faithfully executed; for, in less than half-an-hour, Mr. Drysdale, laughin' like to split his sides, entered my cell.

"What's this, Mr. Smith?—what's this has happened ye, man?" said he, when the laughing would let him speak. "Ye see what it is to hae a bad name. I tell't ye there was mair than me mistaen aboot this affair. It's a most unlucky name yours."

"Confound the name, sir!" said I. "It's like to be baith the ruin an' the death o' me. But what can I do? I canna get quit o't, an' maun just fecht oot wi't the best way I can."

I wasna at first a'thegither in such a laughin humour as my visitor, yet I couldna help joinin him in the lang run, whan we took twa or three guid roun's o't, an' then proceeded to business. Mr. Drysdale said he wad bail me to ony amount, if that were necessary to my immediate liberation; but proposed that he should, in the first place, call on Hodgson, Brothers, whom he knew intimately, an' state the case to them. This he accordingly did; an', in aboot a quarter o' an hour, returned to me in the jail, wi' ane o' thae gentlemen alang wi' him. Mr. Hodgson expressed the utmost concern for what had happened, an' offered me ony reasonable recompense I might name for the injury an' detention to which I had been subjected. This, however, I declined, but expressed a wish that the messengers wha had apprehended me micht be keel-hauled a bit for the rashness o' their proceedins.

"As to that, Mr. Smith," said Mr. Hodgson, smilin, "I think you had as well 'let a-be for let a-be' there. They have been sadly mauled by you, I understand, and it strikes me to be a drawn battle between you."

"Weel, weel," said I, laughin, "e'en let it be sae, then; but the scoonrils ocht to be mair carefu' wha they lay their hands on."

"They ought, no doubt," said Mr. Hodgson; "but, in this case there was really some excuse for them. Our debtor, whom I dare say you know very well, is a young

man of the name of William Smith—a grocer in your own town, who began business there some months ago. Now, he has failed, as I dare say you know, also—has shut shop—swindled his creditors—and fled the country. This was the fellow we wanted to catch; and, you being from the same place, of the same name, and of, as I take it, about the same age, it is really no great wonder that the men were deceived."

I allowed that it was not; but said it was rather hard that the sins o' a' the Willie Smiths in the country should be visited on my shouthers. "There's no a piece o' villany done by, nor a misfortune happens to a Willie Smith," said I, "but it's fastened on me. It's really hard."

My twa visitors laughingly admitted the hardship o' the case, but advised me to be as patient under't as I could—a wishy-washy aneuch sort o' advice; but it was a', I dare say, they had to offer.

I need hardly say that the jail doors were noo instantly thrown open to me, nor that I lost nae time in availin mysel' o' the liberty to which they invited. The first thing I did on gettin oot was to provide mysel wi' a new coat and hat; for, until this was done, I wasna in a fit state to be seen, an' couldna think o' walkin the streets in the torn-down and blackguard lookin condition in which my captors had left me. Havin, however, improved my outward man a little, and brushed up my face a bit—but on which, notwithstandin a' I could do, there continued to remain some ugly traces o' my late adventure—I thocht I couldna do better, as I had noo a lang idle evenin before me, than ca' on twa or three auld and intimate acquaintances o' our family that resided in Glasgow. In pursuance o' this resolution, I began wi' some decent folks o' the name o' Robertson, distant relations o' our ain, and from whom I had, on the occasion o' former visits, o' which I had made twa or three, met wi' the most kind an' cordial welcome;

and o' this I naturally expected a repetition in the present instance. What was my surprise and mortification, then, whan I fand it quite the reverse—most markedly sae!

"Oh, William, is that you!" said Mrs. Robertson, drily, and wi' a degree o' stiffness and cauldness in her manner which I couldna understan'. "*Will* ye stap in a bit?" she added, hesitatingly and evidently wi' reluctance. Weel, she used to fling her arms aboot me, and pu' me in. But it was noo, "*Will* ye step in?" I did, but sune saw there was something wrang; but what it was I couldna conjecture. I overheard her husband and dochters *refusin* Mrs. Robertson's request to them to come ben and see me. They used to a' rush aboot me, like a torrent. In short, I perceived that I was a very unwelcome visitor, and that a speedy retreat on my part wad be highly approved of. Amongst other hints o' this, was Mrs. Robertson's scarcely speakin three words to me a' the time I sat wi' her, and no makin ony offer o' the sma'est refreshment. Her behaviour to me was a'thegither exceedinly strange and mysterious; but what struck me as maist singular, was her aye speakin o' my faither wi' a compassionatin air. "Puir, puir man!" she wad say; "Gude help us! it's a weary warl' this! Ane canna tell what their weans are to come to. Muckle grief and sorrow, I'm sure, do they bring to parents' hearts." These truths bein obvious and general, I couldna deny them, although I was greatly at a loss to see ony particular occasion for advertin to them at the time. Wearied oot at length wi' Mrs. Robertson's truisms, and disgusted wi' her incivility and uncourteous manner to me, I took up my hat, and decamped, wi' as little ceremony as I had been received. I was, in truth, baith provoked and perplexed by her extraordinary treatment o' me, and couldna at a' conjecture to what it could be owin.

But let the reader fancy, if he can, what was my sur-

prise when I fand mysel' treated in almost precisely the same way in every ither hoose at which I ca'ed subsequently to this. There was, in every instance, the same astonishment expressed at seein me, the same cauldness exhibited, and the same mysterious silence maintained durin my visit. I was perfectly confounded at it; but couldna, of course, ask ony explanation, as there was naething sae palpably oot o' joint as to admit o't. Havin made my roun' o' ca's wi' the success and comfort I hae mentioned, I returned to my quarters, and, orderin a tumbler o' toddy, sat down amongst a heap o' newspapers, to amuse mysel' the best way I could till bedtime. The first paper I took up was a Glasgow one, published that day. I skimmed it ower till I cam to a paragraph wi' the followin takin title—"Desperate Ruffian." This catched my e'e at ance; for I was aye fond o' readin aboot desperate ruffians, and horrible accidents, and atrocious murders, &c. &c. "So," says I to mysel', "here's a feast." And I threw up my legs on the firm on which I was seated, drew the candle nearer me, took a mouthfu' oot o' my tumbler, and made every preparation, in short, for a quiet, deliberate, comfortable read; and this I got, to my heart's content. The paragraph, which began wi' "Desperate Ruffian," went on thus:—

"This morning, a scene, at once one of the most disgraceful and ludicrous which we have witnessed for some time, took place in one of the coach-offices of this city. A fellow of the name of William Smith, a young man of about twenty-three or twenty-four years of age, from ——, who is charged with various acts of swindling, and is well known as a person of infamous character, was apprehended on a fugæ warrant, by our two active criminal officers, Messrs. Rob and Ramage, in the —— coach-office, just as he was about to take out a ticket for Greenock, whither he intended to proceed for the purpose of em-

barking for America with his ill-got gains. The ruffian, on being first apprehended, denied his name; but, finding this not avail him, he violently assaulted the officers in the execution of their duty, and, being a powerful man, it was not until those very deserving men had suffered severely in their persons, and obtained the aid of the bystanders, that he was finally secured. This, however, was ultimately accomplished, when the fellow being securely handcuffed, was conducted to jail, and lodged in one of the strongest cells, where he will, of course, remain until brought to trial. There is a rumour that Smith has been concerned in some late coach robbery; but we have heard no particulars, and cannot vouch for its truth, although, from his appearance, we should suppose him to be perfectly capable of anything."

Weel, guid reader, what do ye think o' that? Wasna that a pretty morsel for me to swallow? It is true that I needna hae felt very uneasy aboot the description o' a character that didna belang to me; but it maun be observed that there was here that mixture o' fact and fiction which, in cases o' rumour, it is sae difficult to separate. Moreover, I was certainly the person spoken o', however erroneously represented; there was nae denyin that. I was mingled up wi' the business, and the very process o' establishin my innocence was certain to gie me a most unpleasant notoriety; and was likely, besides, no to be in every case successful. In short, I fand, tak it ony way I liked, that it couldna be reckoned otherwise than as a most unlucky affair. It was noo, too, that I began to smell a rat regardin the treatment I had met wi' frae the different acquaintances I had ca'ed upon. They had either seen the paragraph which I hae just quoted, or had heard o't. The same belief explained to me the cause o' Mrs. Robertson's reflections on the risin generation o' mankind, and her extraordinary sympathy for my father. There

could be nae doot o't—and thus was the mystery solved. Of this I was still further satisfied, when, on takin up anither Glasgow paper o' the same day, I fand that it also contained an account o' the mornin's affair. The twa paragraphs were, on the whole, pretty much alike in substance; but, in the second ane, there were twa or three incidental circumstances mentioned that added to the interest o' the story considerably.

Such, then, was the readin wi' which I beguiled the time on the evenin o' which I am speakin; an' I leave it to the reader o' thae pages to judge hoo far it was calculated to soothe my previously harassed feelins, an' to afford me the relaxation an' amusement I sought, an' o' which I had sae much need. At first, I resolved on takin every possible public an' private measure that could be commanded to counteract the evil reports, o' ae kind an' anither, under which baith mysel personally an' my family were labourin. I thocht on gaun roun to a' the acquaintances on whom I had just been ca'in, an' explainin to them the real state o' the case; an' then followin up this proceedin wi' ca'in on the editors o' the twa papers in which the injurious statements had appeared, an' requestin, nay, insistin, on their puttin in a true version o' the story, at the same time carefully markin my identity, an' separatin me frae a' discreditable transactions, of every kind, degree, an' character whatsoever. A' this I thocht o' doin, I say; but, on reflection, I changed my mind, an' determined no to gie mysel ony such trouble, but just to let things tak their course, an' trust to my ain conduct, an' the weel-kent respectability o' my faither, for the guid opinion o' the warld. Anent the rumour o' oor bankruptcy, however, I thocht there could be nae harm in puttin in an advertisement or twa, contradictory o't; an' this was accordingly done, in the following brief terms:—

"William Smith, hosier, ——, begs to inform his friends

and the public, that he is not the same person whose name appears in the bankrupt list published in the —— newspaper of the 15th inst. All claims on the advertiser will be paid, on demand, at his shop."

This advertisement I handed into the offices o' twa Glasgow papers that same nicht, an' next mornin saw me safely perched on the tap o' the coach for oor ain place, glad that a' my misadventures were owre, an' that I was soon to be at hame again; for I was sick o' Glasgow—an' the reader will allow no without some reason. The coach on which I was mounted was just aboot to start, the driver had taen the reins in his hand, an' the guard was strugglin to get up the last trunk, whan the waiter o' the inn in which I had been stoppin, an' which was at the head o' a prodigiously lang close, just at the startin-place, cam rinnin up, an' cried, lookin at the same time at the passengers—

"Is there a Mr. Smith here?"

I expected that half-a-dozen at least wad hae owned the name; but, to my surprise, there was no Mr. Smith amang them, but mysel.

"They ca' me Smith, my man—what is it?" said I, wi' a suspicious look; for I noo stood greatly in awe o' my ain name—no bein sure what mischief it micht lead me into.

"There's a gentleman up in the hoose wants to see you directly," said the lad.

"But I canna go till him, man—ye see the coach is just gaun to start," said I.

"Ay, but he says that's o' nae consequence. Ye maun come till him. He has something o' importance to say to ye."

Thinkin it wasna advisable to slight a message o' sae pressin a nature, an' curious to ken wha it was that could be wantin me, an' what he could be wantin me for, I leaped down, resolvin to mak my legs, which were gay an'

lang an' souple anes, save my distance, an' havin nae doubt they wad, critical as the case was. I up the close like a shot, an' into the hoose; but, though *I* was in a hurry, the waiter wha had come for me was in nane. He didna appear for five minutes after; an', as he was the only person wha kent onything aboot a message bein sent after me, I had to wait his return, before I could find oot the person wha wanted me. This, however, he noo effected for me; but not before a good deal mair time was lost. The gentleman who wished to see me was dressin; so I was shewn into a room, while the waiter went to inform him o' my arrival. In a minute or twa after—durin which I was dancin aboot in a fever of impatience, for fear o' losin the coach—the door o' the apartment flew open, an' a laughin, joyous-lookin fellow, with a loud "Aha, Bob!" an' extended hand, rushed in; but he didna rush far. The instant he got his ee fairly on me, he stopped short, an', lookin as grave's a rat, bowed politely, an' said he was exceedingly sorry to perceive that he had committed a gross mistake.

"The fact is, my dear sir," he said, becomin again affable, to reconcile me, I suppose, to the unfortunate blunder, an' speakin wi' great volubility, "my name is Smith, which, I suppose, is yours too, sir. I'm from London. Now, you see, my dear sir, my brother Bob, who lives in Ireland, and whom I haven't seen for some years, was to have met me here last night, agreeably to arrangements made by letter, and we were to have gone this morning, as it were, by the same coach in which you were going, to visit some friends in that part of the country to which it runs. Well, you see, I arrived here only this morning early; but the first thing I did was to inquire if there was a Mr. Smith in the house, and I was distinctly told by the rascal of a waiter that there was no person of that name. Well, what does the fellow do, but come running to my bedside, a little

ago, and tells me that there *had been* a Mr. Smith in the house over night, and that he was at that moment on the top of the —— coach. Well, my dear sir, did not I immediately and very naturally conclude that this Mr. Smith must be my brother! And thus has this unlucky mistake happened. 'Pon my honour, I am most sorry for it—exceedingly sorry, indeed."

Bein naturally o' a very placable disposition, I didna say much in reply to this harangue; but, mutterin something aboot there bein nae help for't, rushed oot o' the hoose, an' down the confounded lang close, as fast as my legs could carry me, and that was pretty fast; but no fast aneuch to catch the coach. It was aff an' awa, mony a lang minute afore.

"Aweel," said I, on discoverin this, "but this does beat cock-fechtin! What, in heaven's name, am I to do wi' this unfortunate patronymic o' mine? It's crossin me wi' mischief o' ae kind or anither at every step. I suppose I'll be hanged in a mistake next. That'll be the end o't. I'll change't, if I leeve to get hame—I'll change't, let what like be the consequence, or I'll hae an *alias* added till't, before waur comes o't; for this 'll never do."

In such reflections as thae did I expend the impatient feelin that the loss o' the coach, an' the recollection o' certain ither sma' incidents, with which the reader is acquainted, had gien rise to. But little guid they did me; an' this I at length fand oot. Sae I just gied a bit smile to mysel, an' made up my mind to wait patiently for the next coach, which started the same nicht, though at a pretty late hour. Late as that hour was, however, it cam roun, an', whan it did, it fand me, withoot havin met wi' ony ither misfortune in the interim, mounted again on the tap o' a coach. This time I was allowed to keep my seat in peace. The coach drove awa, an' me alang wi't; an', in twal hours thereafter, I fand mysel in my faither's hoose, safe and soun', after a' that had happened me.

Shortly after the occurrences which I have just related, my puir faither departed this life, and I, as his only son and heir, succeeded to a' his possessions—stock, lock, and barrel; and I now only wanted a wife to complete my establishment, and fix my position in society. This, however, didna remain lang a desideratum wi' me. A wife I got, and as guid a ane as ever man was blessed wi'; but it was rather a curious sort o' way that I got her. Ae nicht, pretty late, in the summer o' the year 1796, a rather smart rap comes to our door. We were a' in bed—mother, servant lass, and a'; but, on hearin't, I bangs up, on wi' my claes, lichts a cannle, and opens the door. On doing this, then, I sees a porter loaded wi' trunks and bandboxes, and behint him a very pretty, genteel-lookin young woman.

"Here's a frien o' yours come to see you, frae Edinburgh," says the porter, whom I kent weel aneuch; and wi' this the young leddy comes forward, wi' a licht step, and ane o' the prettiest smiles I ever saw; and, says she, haudin oot her haun to me—

"Ye'll no ken me, Mr. Smith, I dare say?"

"No, indeed, mem," says I—"I do not."

"I'm a cousin o' yours," said she—"Margaret Smith, and a dochter o' your uncle William's."

"Frae Edinburgh," said I, takin her cordially by the haun, and leadin her into the parlour.

"The same," said she smilin again; "and I'm just come doun to spend a day or twa wi' ye, if ye hae room for me, and winna think me owre troublesome."

"Room!" said I—"plenty o' room; and, as for trouble, dinna mention that." And I assisted my fair cousin to remove her shawl and other haps. This cousin, I may mention by the way, I had never seen before; and neither had she ever seen ony o' us, although we knew perfectly weel o' each other's existence. But this within parentheses.

Havin seen my pretty cousin—for she was really a bonny-

lookin and modest creature—made so far comfortable, I ran joyfully to my mother, to inform her o' oor acquisition. My mother, who had never seen her either, was delighted wi' the intelligence, and instantly rose to welcome her. The servant was roused oot o' her bed, a little supper prepared, and some delightful hours we spent together. I was charmed wi' my fair cousin; so intelligent, so lively, so sensible, so accomplished—so much o' everything, in short, that was captivatin in a young and beautifu' woman. Nor was my mother less delighted wi' her than I was. There were, indeed, some things spoken o' in the course o' conversation between my mother, and oor guest, and I, relatin to family affairs, in which we couldna somehow or other come to a distinct understandin. There was something like cross-purposes between us; and I observed that my fair cousin was extraordinary ignorant o' a' matters concerning us, and o' the circumstances o' a number o' oor mutual relations. But this neither my mother nor I thought much o', either. It was just sae like a bit lively thochtless lassie, wha couldna be expected to hae either the genealogy of a' her friends, or their particular callins or residences, at her finger ends. However, as I said before, we spent a pleasant evening thegither; and this followed by eight as pleasant days, durin which time our fair guest continued to make rapid progress in the affections o' baith my mother and me; although, of course, the regard she excited was somewhat different in its nature in the twa cases. In mine it was love—in my mother's esteem. But a' this was to hae a sudden and curious termination. At the end o' the eight days above alluded to, happenin to tak up a newspaper, I was attracted by an advertisement bearing the following highly interesting title—"Young Lady Missing." I read on, and found, to my amazement, that the young lady was no other than my fair cousin. The notice stated, that she had gone down to ——, to visit

some relations; had left Edinburgh, by the —— coach, on the mornin of the 10th, and had been safely set down at ——; but that her relations there had seen nothing of her, and that no trace of her could since be found. The advertisement concluded by offering a handsome reward to any one who could give any such information as might lead to a discovery of the young lady, either to Mr. William Smith, haberdasher, ——, or to Mr. William Smith, No. 19, Lavender Street, Edinburgh.

Here, then, was a queer business. But, bein now somewhat accustomed to thae things, I was at nae loss to discover the meanin o't. The young lady wasna my cousin at a'—she had come to the wrang shop. She was a niece o' Willie Smith the haberdasher's—and there was the mystery solved at ance. It turned oot precisely sae. There was an awfu kick-up, and an awfu rejoicin, and shakin o' hands, and writin o' letters, and sae forth, after I had announced to the different parties how the matter stood, and brocht them thegither. But I wasna gaun to lose my fair cousin this way. I followed her to Willie Smith's, whar I was a welcome aneuch guest, and availed mysel to the full o' the advantages which a curious chance had thrown in my way, by eventually makin her my wife; and, as I said before, a most admirable one she made, and still maks, as she is sittin by my elbow at this present writin.

Noo, guid reader, sae far hae I brocht the story o' my life, or perhaps, rather o' my unfortunate name, (no a'thegither so unfortunate either, since it helped me to sic a wife,) and I maun stop; but it's for want o' room, and, I assure you, no for want o' matter. What I hae tell't ye is no a tithe o' the sufferings I hae endured through this unhappy patronymic o' mine. In truth, it was but the beginnin o' them. The rest I may relate to ye on some future day. In the meantime, guid reader, I bid ye fareweel, wi' a sincere houp that yer name's no Willie Smith.

THE PROFESSOR'S TALES.

PHEBE FORTUNE.

I HAVE now been upwards of forty years minister of the parish of C——. Soon after I became minister, I stumbled one morning upon a small parcel lying in a turnip field adjoining the manse. It appeared to me at first to be a large hedgehog; but, upon further investigation, I found that it was a seemingly new-born infant, wrapt carefully up in warm flannel, and dressed in clothes which indicated anything but extreme poverty. There was a kirk-road through the turnip field—my wonted passage to my glebe land every morning; and the infant had manifestly been deposited with a reference to my habits. I could not possibly miss seeing it—it lay completely across my path—a road almost untrod by anybody save myself.

As I happened to have a young, and a pretty large—or, in other phrase, small—family of my own, I hesitated at first how to proceed; but a moment's reflection taught me the necessity of acting rather than of thinking; and I gathered up the little innocent in my arms, and hastened back, with all possible speed, to the manse. The little hands of the helpless existence were moving backwards and forwards, up and down; and its lips plainly indicated a desire for its natural beverage.

"Bless me!" said my dear wife, as I entered; "bless me, my dear, what's that you are bringing us?"

"It's a child," said I; "an infant—beautiful as day—only look at it."

"None of your nonsense," said spousie, looking some-

what archly in my face. "I'm sure, ye ken, we hae mae weans than we hae meat for already. But where in all the world did you pick up this sweet little darling?"—for, by this time, my wife had opened the flannel coverings, and examined the features of the young stranger carefully.

My second youngest girl, about four years of age, had joined us, and, falling down on her knees, kissed the foundling's cheeks all over. In fact, the news spread all over the manse in less than no time; and I had my two eldest boys—then preparing for school—my eldest daughter, and the two maid-servants, all tumbling into the parlour in a world of amazement. My wife, however, having recovered from her first surprise and burst of natural affection, began, very naturally, to speculate about the parentage of the uninvited visitant. She examined its dress; and, amongst other discoveries, found a piece of paper attached to the body of the frock, inscribed with these words, in a plain printed hand—"I am not what I seem. My name is Phebe." On searching a little more particularly, a hundred-pound note was found stitched into a small purse or bag, suspended from the infant's neck. We were all amazement. My wife was all at once persuaded that the infant must be the offspring of some lady of high quality, and that, by keeping her in our family, we should be absolutely enriched by presents of hundred-pound notes every other morning. She seemed to look upon poor Phebe as the philosopher's stone, and thought that gold would, in future, be as plentiful in our house as brass coinage had hitherto been. But who could be the mother of this pretty, sweet, dear, darling, lovely child? Could it be—and she whispered me knowingly in the ear; but I shook my head, and looked equally knowing. Could it be Lady M——? I looked incredulity, and my wife pushed her speculations no further. By this time

my oldest daughter had arranged Phebe's dress, and made all snug; and the poor little infant gave audible intimation of a desire for food. What was to be done? This question occupied us for about a quarter of an hour, when we at last recollected that Lord C——'s gardener's wife had yesterday buried her infant. She was immediately sent for, and, having no children of her own, agreed, after some persuasion and the promise of a handsome reward, to suckle poor Phebe. It was, indeed, beautifully interesting to observe how Phebe's little hands wandered over the source of her sustenance, and seemed to say, as plainly as hands could speak it, "I have you now, and will not part with you again." Phebe grew—opened her sweet blue eyes—smiled—and won all hearts in the course of a month. But she was still a heathen, or, in other words, unbaptised; and, after consulting the session, whom I advertised of all the circumstances, it was agreed that the gardener's wife should take the vows, and name the child. We all wept at the christening; there was something so unusual and overpowering, so mysterious and exciting, in the whole transaction. My wife suggested that she should be called "Phebe Monday," that being the day on which she was found; but, somehow or other, I disliked the combination of sounds exceedingly; and at last, at the suggestion of the nurse-mother, we affixed Fortune to her Christian designation; and, after the ceremony, which was performed in the gardener's house, we drank a glass of ginger wine to the health and long life of little Phebe Fortune, the foundling. Through the kindness of Lord C——, I had the privilege of walking when I chose in his extensive gardens and pleasure-grounds, which were in my parish, and adjoining to the manse; and it was on one of the smooth-rolled grass walks of this garden that I conducted little Phebe's first steps, when she put down her little foot for the first time, and stood almost erect on the grass. Oh, how the

little doll screamed and chuckled as she tumbled over and rolled about; ever and anon stretching out her little hand, and asking, as it were, my assistance in aiding her inexperience and weakness. However, "*Tentando fimus fabri*," by effort, frequently repeated, success is at last secured; and Phebe at last flew off from me like an arrow, and, like an arrow, too, alighted head foremost on the soft sward. Phebe won all hearts when she began to syllable people's names. Me she called "minny-man;" my wife, "minny-man-minny;" and her own nurse, "mother, ma, ma, bonny ma! guid ma!" Year rolled on after year, and little Phebe was the talk of all the country round. People passing on the highroad stopped and spoke to her. Phebe used often to visit the manse, and to play with my youngest daughter, only a few months younger than herself, whilst I have often sat in my elbow chair, called in the family "Snug," and said to myself, "I am sure I cannot tell which of these children I am most attached to." All the features and properties of little Phebe were aristocratic: beautiful feet and anckles; small, little plump hands, and finely-tapered fingers; an eye of the purest water and the most noble expression, beaming through a curtain of deep blue, under a canopy of the finest auburn; a brow, nose, lips, and chin, all exquisitely formed and proportioned. No child in the neighbourhood could be compared with Phebe. Even my wife, prejudiced as she naturally was in favour of her own offspring, used sometimes to say—"Our Jessie looks well enough; but that child Phebe is a pear of another tree." To this I readily assented, as I had no inclination to hint either the identity of the tree or the affinity of the fruit.

One day I was walking with little Phebe (who had now attained her seventh year, and exhausted the last penny of the hundred pounds) in my own little garden—we were quite alone, when the girl all at once stopped her playful-

ness (for she was now a very lark), and, taking a hold of my hand, pulled me gently, nothing loath, into an adjoining little arbour: after I was seated, and Phebe had taken her wonted station betwixt my knees, reserving either knee for future convenience, the little angel looked up in my face so innocently and so sweetly, saying—

"You are Jessie's pa, are not you?"

"Yes," I replied, "my dear child, I am."

"But where is my pa? have I no pa? Gardener says you know all about it."

I regretted exceedingly that anything should have passed betwixt the foster-parents and their charge upon the subject; but, since it was so, I judged it best at once to tell the child the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Phebe looked me most intently in the face as I proceeded; and when I had finished by kissing her, and assuring her that whilst I lived she should never want a pa, the poor dear burst into tears, exclaiming, in an accent of complete misery—

"No pa! no ma! Everybody has pa's and ma's but Phebe. Dear, dear minny"—a term by which she still addressed me—"can you not tell me anything about my own ma?"

I assured her that I could not, having not the least information on the subject.

"Maybe she's dead"—and here again her feelings overcame her, and she laid her head on my knee, with all its luxuriant tresses; and I felt the tears warm on my person.

From this day Phebe Fortune became a different child. Even at an early age she had learned to think; but had been hitherto very averse to learning, or school education. She was henceforth diligent and attentive, making rapid progress in reading, writing, and accounts. Her foster-mother taught her sewing; and little Phebe, by the time

she was eleven years old, was quite accomplished in all the necessary and useful parts of a female education. But, alas! the instability of human affairs!—poor Phebe caught a fever, which she communicated to her foster-mother, and which occasioned *her* death in a few weeks, whilst Phebe slowly recovered. The gardener's heart was broken—he had long been subject to occasional fits of low spirits. Whether from accident or not was never fully ascertained, nor even closely investigated; but he was found one morning drowned, in a pond of water which ornamented the east corner of the garden ground. As my own family was numerous, and my stipend limited, I behoved to endeavour to place Phebe in some way of doing for herself—still hoping, however, that time ere long would withdraw the veil, and discover the sunny side of Phebe Fortune's history. Seldom did a carriage pass the manse by the king's highway, that my wife did not conjecture that it might perhaps stop at the bottom of the avenue, and emit a fine lady, with fine manners and a genteel tongue, to claim our now highly interesting ward. But the perverse carriages persevered in rolling rapidly along, till at last, one fine sunny afternoon, one did actually stop, and out stepped the lady, middle-aged, splendidly attired, and advanced towards our habitation. My wife's heart was at her mouth—she ran through the house in a few seconds, from bottom to top, had Phebe put into her best attire, and all diligence served upon the dusting and cleaning of carpets and chairs. The lady appeared; but, to my wife's great disappointment, proved to be no other than an old pupil of my own, who, in passing, had heard of my residence, and wished kindly to renew an acquaintance interrupted by, perhaps, not less than thirty years. Still my wife would not give up the notion that Phebe resembled Lady D—— exceedingly, and that Lady D—— seemed to eye her with more complacency than any of the rest of the children. In the

course of conversation, I had occasion to acknowledge that the beautiful being whom Lady D—— admired above all the rest of my fine family was a foundling. This led to a detail of the whole matter; and Lady D——, having conversed for a little with Phebe, took such a liking to the girl that she proposed having her continually about her person, as a kind of superior waiting-maid, half menial and half companion, and to remove her from under our roof on the instant. Although this was an offer too good and too opportune to be negatived, yet we could not think of parting with our darling Phebe on so short a warning; and, after some remonstrances on both sides, it was agreed that the carriage should be sent for Phebe and me on a future day, which was named, and that I should spend a few days with my old pupil, in her recently acquired and lately inhabited mansion-house of Rosehall, little more than thirty miles distant. The interval which took place betwixt this proposal and its accomplishment was spent in needlework and other little feminine preparations; and, as the day approached, we all felt as if we could have wished that we had rejected the proposal with disdain. Phebe was often seen in tears—but she was all resignation, and rejoiced that I was to accompany her, and see her fairly entered. At last the dreadful carriage, with its four horses, came into view at the foot of our avenue (which, though possessed of a sufficiently imposing appellation, was nothing more nor less than a very bad and nearly impassable cart road), and we all began our march to meet the vehicle. Promises of future visits were spoken of, and made, and solemnly sworn to—a home, house, or manse was declared to Phebe at all times; but, particularly, should she find herself unhappy in her new position; and it was with difficulty that I got the now truly lovely, and all but woman, Phebe, torn from the grasp and cling of my daughters, and handed into the splendid and richly-lined chariot.

In the family of Lady D——, Phebe's duties were at once easy and agreeable. She waited upon her mistress's bell in the morning, and was soon taught how to assist at the toilet. During the day, she either read aloud, whilst her Ladyship reposed after her forenoon's walk or drive, or looked after the health and comfort of two favourite lap-dogs. At night, again, she renewed her closet assistance, reading aloud some paragraph which she had marked in a newspaper, and detailing such little domestic incidents as came within the range of her somewhat limited sphere of observation. Lord D—— was much engaged in public business (being lord-lieutenant of the county), and in carrying on some agricultural speculations by which he was much engrossed. There were two young Honourables of the fair sex, and an only son—then attending his studies at Oxford—children of the family. Phebe Fortune was now fifteen, and seemed to increase in loveliness, and the most kindly, intelligent expression of countenance, daily. Her eyes were heaven's own *blue*—

> "The little halcyon's azure plume
> Was never half so blue."

And then, when she spoke or smiled, her countenance was altogether overpowering; as well might you have attempted to look steadfastly upon the sun in his midday radiance. Of *her* far more truly and forcibly might it have been said or sung, than of the "Lassie wi' the Lint-white Locks"—

> "She talked, she smiled, my heart she wiled,
> She charmed my soul, I wat na hoo;
> But aye the stound, the deadly wound,
> Cam frae her een sae bonny blue."

Phebe, by my own arrangement with Lady D——, was not exposed to any intimacy with the servants, male or female. She had her own apartment and table; and all the menial duties were performed to her as regularly as

to any branch of the family. It was soon after my return from a three weeks' visit at Rosehall, that I received the following letter from Phebe. I got it at the post-office, unknown to any of my family; and I kept it, as was my custom when I had anything agreeable to communicate, till after dinner. The board having been cleared, and a tumbler of warm toddy made, my wife's single glass having been filled out, and my daughters having turned them all ear, I proceeded to read the following maiden epistle of Phebe Fortune:—

"Dear, dear Papa, and ever dear Mamma, and all my own Sisters dear—I am happy here; Lady D—— is so kind to me; and Lord D—— looks very kind too, though he has not spoken to me yet—but then you see he is always engaged; and the honourable young ladies—but I do not think they are quite so kind; and they are so pretty too, and so happy looking! Oh, I wish they would like me! If they would only speak to me now and then as they pass me on the stair; but they only stop and laugh to one another, and then they toss their heads; and I can hear them say something about 'upsetting,' and 'mamma's whim, and papa's absurdity.' I'm sure—I'm sure, my dear parents—(for, alas! I have none other, though I dream sometimes that I have, and I feel so happy and delighted, that I always awake crying)—but what was I going to say?—you know I never wrote any letters before, and you will excuse this I know—I could not, I am sure, speak of whim or absurdity in regard to you, my dear benefactors. But I will try never to mind it. Lady D—— is so very kind. I sometimes go out with the little dogs, Poodle and Clara; they are such dear pets, I could take them, and do often take them to my bosom. And then, the other day, when I was sitting playing with Clara and Poodle, beneath the elm tree, the gardener's son

passed me, and—no he did not pass, that is to say not all at once—but he stopped, and asked me to take a flower, which he had pulled for me, which I did, and then he offered to show me through the hot-houses, but I did not go. My dear mamma, do you think I should have gone? And then he left me; but yesterday a little boy gave me the following letter. And all that the letter contains is this—

"If you love me as I love thee,
What a loving couple we shall be!"

Love him!—oh, no—no—no—I will never, never walk that way again—I will never, never speak to him more. I love you, my own dear papa, and mamma, and my sisters, and Lady D——, and the two little dear doggies; but I never could love Donald M'Naughton; not but that he is good-looking, too, and young, and respected in the family; but he never can be a father or mother to me you know, as you have been. Oh! do write me soon, soon—and tell me all about the garden, and the ash-tree, and the arbour, and the flowers, and old Neptune, your favourite, and everything. I remain, most affectionately, yours,

PHEBE FORTUNE.

"P.S.—But Fortune is not my name. Oh, that I had a name worth writing!—such a name as Lindsay, Crawford, Hamilton, Douglas. Oh! how beautifully Phebe Douglas would look on paper, and sound in one's ear!"

Such was the state of Phebe's mind and feelings at that interesting period of life when the female is in the transition from the mere girl to the real woman; and it was about this very period, when all the feelings are peculiarly alive to each fine impulse, that it fell to Phebe's lot to be severely tried. Day after day, and week after week, Lady

D—— missed some valuable article of dress, some Flanders lace, some costly trinket, a ring it might be, or a bracelet. At last Lady D—— thought it proper to inform her lord of the fact, who, upon obtaining a search warrant unknown to any one save his lady, had the trunks of the whole household establishment strictly searched. Poor Phebe's little chest, "wi' her a' int," discovered, to the amazement of all, the whole lot of the missing articles. Lady D—— looked as if she had been suddenly struck with lightning; whilst poor Phebe regarded the whole as a jest, a method adopted by her lady, or his lordship, to try her character and firmness. She absolutely laughed at the denouement, and seemed altogether unconcerned about the matter. This, to his lordship in particular, appeared to be a confirmation of guilt; and he immediately ordered her person to be secured, evidence of her guilt to be made out, and a criminal trial to be instituted. When the full truth dawned upon poor Phebe, she sat as one would do who is vainly endeavouring to recollect something which has escaped his memory. Her colour left her; she was pale as Parian marble; her eyes became dim, and her ears sang; she fainted; and it was not till after great and repeated exertion that she was recovered, through the usual painful steps, to a perception of the outward world. She looked wildly around her. Lady D—— was standing with her handkerchief at her eyes—she had wept aloud.

"O Phebe," said her ladyship, "are you guilty of this?"

Phebe repeated the word "guilty" twice, looked wildly on Lady D——'s eyes, and then, in an unsettled and alarmed manner, all round the room.

"Guilty!" she repeated—"Guilty of what? Who is guilty? It is not he. I am sure he could not be guilty. Oh, no—no—no—he is my father, my friend, my protector, my minny, my dear, dear minny—he could not do it! he never did it! You are all wrong!—and my poor, poor,

head, is odd—odd—odd." Thus saying, she clasped her forehead in a frenzied manner, and nature again came to her relief in a second pause of insensibility, from which she only recovered to indicate that her remaining faculties had seemingly left her. Time, however, gradually awakened her to a perception of the sad reality; and it was from a chamber in the castle, to which she was confined, that she wrote the following letter to her original and kind protector:—

"OH, MY EVER DEAR FRIEND—Your Phebe is accused of—I cannot write it, I cannot bear to look at the horrid word—of stealing. Oh, that you had let me lie where the wickedness of an unknown parent exposed my helplessness to the random tread of the passenger! Oh, come and see me; I grow positively confused; your Phebe is imprisoned in her own chamber; but my poor head is swimming again—there—there—I see everybody whirling about on the chimney tops—there they go—there they go! I can only see to write

PHEBE."

There was no date to this sad scrawl; but it needed none; for in twenty-four hours after it had arrived at the manse, I had set out on my way to Rosehall. The meeting betwixt the foster-father and the child was, of course, exceedingly affecting. Investigations into the whole matter were renewed; but no other way could be thought of for accounting for the presence of the missing property in Phebe's locked trunk, than the supposition which implied her guilt.

"I could stake my life, my salvation," said I, "on Phebe's innocence." But Lord D—— doubted; his Lady could not have believed it possible; but still there were, she said, similar cases on record—one, quite in point, had

just occurred in her neighbourhood, where the guilty party had, up to the dishonest act, borne a very high character. The circuit trial came on in about ten days, and Phebe, accompanied by the minister, and the best legal advice, was seated at the bar on her trial. Witnesses were examined, who swore that they saw the trunk opened, and Lady D——'s property discovered; others, particularly the lady's maid, swore that she all along suspected Phebe, from seeing her always shutting, and often locking her door inside. She once looked through the key-hole, and saw Phebe busied with her trunk; she saw something in her hand that sparkled. Phebe had no exculpatory evidence but her simple averment that she knew not how the articles came there—she never brought them. The king's advocate having restricted the sentence, and the jury having brought in unanimously a verdict of guilty, the judge was on the point of pronouncing a sentence of banishment, when the poor pannel fainted. It was a most affecting scene to hear the sentence of banishment pronounced over a piece of insensate clay. All wept—even the judge; and Phebe was carried out of court, apparently quite dead.

Next morning I was found sitting with a cheerful countenance by Phebe's couch, in the prison-house. I had good news I said to impart to her:—

"The girl who has been the principal witness against you, has been suddenly seized, during the night, with an excruciating and evidently fatal disease; in the agonies of death she has confessed to me, and in the presence of Lady D—— too, that she had sworn to a lie; that she herself with her own hand, and by means of a false key, placed the articles—which she had originally stolen with the view of retaining them—in your chest. This she had done from jealousy, having observed that her lover, the gardener's son, had fixed his affections upon you."

All this was solemnly attested in the presence of witnesses, and all this was conveyed in a suitable manner to the judge; in consequence of which, and through the usual preliminary steps, Phebe was set free, and again admitted into the full confidence and the friendship of the family.

It so happened, that a young nobleman had witnessed the whole trial from the bench, and had taken an exceeding interest in Phebe, whose beautiful and modest demeanour and countenance not even despair could entirely disfigure. Having made some inquiries respecting her history, he was led to make more, and discovered considerable emotion when I unfolded the whole truth to him. Still he said nothing, but took his departure, with many thanks for the information given. In a few days, this same young nobleman, of remarkably fine features, and pleasing expression, returned to the Manse of C——, having an elderly gentleman in the carriage along with him. He requested a private interview with me; and, in the presence of his friend, I travelled over again the whole particulars of the foundling's story, comparing dates, and investigating seeming inconsistencies. At last, he declared, at once, and in tears of amazement and joy—"Phebe Fortune is my own—my only *sister!*" I looked incredulous, and almost hinted at insanity; but the young nobleman still persevered in his averment. His father, a nobleman of high rank, far south of the Tweed, in order to gratify a passion which had driven him almost mad, had consented to *pretend* to marry privately (his own father being still alive, and set upon his son's marrying his cousin the Honourable Miss D——), a most beautiful girl, the daughter of a Chester yeoman of high respectability. The lady was removed from her native home, and lodged in a remote quarter of the town of Liverpool. A report was fabricated, and spread abroad by means of the newspapers, that a lady, who was minutely described, had jumped one

evening into a boat, and, being rowed, at her request, to some distance, had plunged into the sea, and perished. Phebe's parents investigated the matter, as far as the boatman's evidence was concerned, and were satisfied from his description of her person, that their dear Phebe, who, for some time past, had appeared troubled and even dispirited, had adopted suicide as a refuge from all her earthly cares. Phebe and the Honourable Mr. L—— met frequently in secret, and a daughter was the fruit of their interviews. This daughter the young nobleman proposed to put out to nurse; but, in reality, to put beyond the reach of being ever recognised as his. A confidential person was obtained, herself a Scotchwoman, to carry the child into Fife, and there to expose it, under the circumstances and with the provision already mentioned. This person chanced to be a parishioner of mine, and the consequences were as already described. Having executed her task, she married a soldier, with whom she soon after sailed for our West India settlements. Phebe's second birth proved to be a male; and the boy was about to be removed in a similar manner from the mother, when she absconded from her now tyrannical husband, and her concealed home, refusing to be again separated from her own offspring. Her parents, who had regarded her as dead, were sufficiently surprised, but by no means gratified, when Phebe appeared again with the child in her arms. In the meantime, Lord L—— died, and the Honourable youth became Baron L—— of Houston-hope. Poor Phebe's averment respecting her previous marriage was regarded, even by her parents, as somewhat suspicious; and not being able to command the testimony of the person who married them, she was compelled to remain silent. The effort, however, soon cost her her life; and the boy, by his acknowledged father's interest, was placed in the army, and sent out to the West Indies. There he accidentally met with the woman his

mother had often mentioned to him, who had carried off his sister. She confessed the whole truth to him; and, after a year or two, they both returned in the same ship to England. By this time, the noble husband being free to dispose of his hand in matrimony, proposed, not for his cousin, as his father had contemplated, but for the daughter of an exceedingly wealthy Liverpool merchant. This person happened to be the near relative of him who had called what was deemed only a pretended priest to perform the marriage ceremony; and, seeing the danger which his relative would run, should he give away his daughter, in hopes of her offspring heiring the title and property, when a legitimate heir probably existed, he divulged the secret to his relations. This naturally led to a denouement; and Lord L—— being thus frustrated in his object, and being at the same time a person governed more by passion than reason, shot the person who had deceived him through the arm; and then, thinking that he had committed murder, he blew out his own brains.

The brother of Phebe, after a long and complicated legal investigation, was declared and served heir to the title and vast property. Taking the clergyman who had married his mother along with him, he had gone into Scotland, partly to visit his uncle, Lord D——, and partly, by the assistance of the priest and the Scotchwoman, to discover what had become of his sister. Her likeness to himself and his mother had struck him forcibly in court, and the investigation and discovery followed.

To describe the interview betwixt the brother and sister is far beyond my power. Every heart will appreciate it more than ink and paper can possibly express. It was a pure—a long—a terrible embrace; but it spoke volumes, heart met heart, and lips were glued to lips, till breathing became inconvenient. All parties rejoiced. Phebe, on her way south along with her brother, spent a whole day

at the Manse. I was absolutely insane with joy; and my wife told me privately—"My dear, our fortune is made; we'll get all our boys out to India now." My daughters, too, kissed and fondled their sister, "and all went merry as a marriage bell."

"How sweet is pleasure after pain!"

The contrast of Phebe's fortune greatly enhanced the enjoyment; and, in the space of a few short months, Phebe Fortune was married to her own cousin, the son of Lord and Lady D——, her kind protectors. The old couple are still alive; but their children, with a numerous offspring, live upon one of their estates in Ayrshire, and exhibit to all around them the blessings which a humane and generous aristocracy may disseminate amidst neighbours and dependents. The brother of Phebe, Lord L——, still remains a bachelor; but has proved to his mother's relatives, as well as to the parties who befriended her by deceiving his dishonourable parent, that he feels the obligation, and rewards it, by making them one way or another entirely independent.

I go my weekly rounds amongst those now happy families, and have experienced the truth of my wife's prophecy; for both my boys are advantageously disposed of, and, on the marriage of my eldest daughter, Phebe Fortune made her a present of one thousand pounds.

THE ROYAL BRIDAL;

OR,

THE KING MAY COME IN THE CADGER'S WAY.

EARLY in July, in the year of grace 1503, Lamberton Moor presented a proud and right noble spectacle. Upon it was outspread a city of pavilions, some of them covered with cloth of the gorgeous purple and glowing crimson, and decorated with ornaments of gold and silver. To and fro, upon brave steeds, richly caparisoned, rode a hundred lords and their followers, with many a score of gay and gallant knights and their attendant gentlemen. Fair ladies, too, the loveliest and the noblest in the land, were there. The sounds of music from many instruments rolled over the heath. The lance gleamed, and the claymore flashed, and war-steeds neighed, as the notes of the bugle rang loud for the tournament. It seemed as if the genius of chivalry had fixed its court upon the heath.

It may be meet, however, that we say a word or two concerning Lamberton, for though, now-a-days, it may lack the notoriety of Gretna in the annals of matrimony, and though its "*run of business*" may be of a humbler character, there was a time when it could boast of prouder visitors than ever graced the Gretna blacksmith's temple. To the reader, therefore, who is unacquainted with our eastern Borders, it may be necessary to say, that, at the northern boundary of the lands appertaining to the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, and about three miles, a furlong, and few odd yards from that oft-recorded good town, a dry stone wall,

some thirty inches in height, runs from the lofty and perpendicular sea-banks, over a portion of what may be termed the fag-end of Lammermoor, and now forming a separation between the laws of Scotland and the jurisdiction of the said good town; and on crossing to the northern side of this humble but important stone wall, you stand on the lands of Lamberton. Rather more than a stone-throw from the sea, the great north road between London and Edinburgh forms a gap in the wall aforesaid, or rather "dyke;" and there, on either side of the road, stands a low house, in which Hymen's high priests are ever ready to make one flesh of their worshippers. About a quarter of a mile north of these, may still be traced something of the ruins of the kirk, where the princess of England became the bride of the Scottish king, and the first link of the golden chain of UNION, which eventually clasped the two nations in one, may be said to have been formed.

The gay and gallant company were assembled on Lamberton, for within the walls of its kirk, the young, ardent, and chivalrous James IV. of Scotland was to receive the hand of his fair bride, Margaret of England, whom Dunbar describes as a

"Fresche rose, of cullor reid and white."

The wild heath presented all the splendour of a court, and the amusements of a crowded city. Upon it were thousands of spectators, who had come to witness the royal exhibitions, and the first durable bond of amity between two rival nations. Some crowded to behold the tourneyings of the knights with sword, spear, and battle-axe; others to witness the representation of plays, written "expressly for the occasion;" while a third party were delighted with the grotesque figures and positions of the morris-dancers; and a fourth joined in, or were spectators of, the humbler athletic exercises of wrestling, leaping, putting the stone, and throwing the hammer.

All, too, were anxious to see the young king, whose courage and generosity were the theme of minstrels, and of whom one sayeth—

> "And ye Christian princes, whosoever ye be,
> If ye be destitute of a noble captayne,
> Take James of Scotland for his audacitie
> And proved manhood, if ye will laud attayne."

But the young monarch was as remarkable for his gallantry and eccentricity, as for his generosity and courage; and no one seemed able to tell whether or not he lodged in the magnificent pavilion over which the royal standard of Scotland waved, or whether he intended to welcome his royal bride by proxy.

But our story requires that, for a time, we leave princes, knights, and tournaments, and notice humbler personages, and more homely amusements. At a distance from the pavilion, the tourneyings, the music, the plays, and other exhibitions, was a crowd composed of some seven or eight hundred peasantry engaged in and witnessing the athletic games of the Borders. Near these were a number of humbler booths, in which the spectators and competitors might regale themselves with the spirits and tippeny then in use.

Amongst the competitors was one called Meikle Robin, or Robin Meikle. He was strength personified. His stature exceeded six feet; his shoulders were broad, his chest round, his limbs well and strongly put together. He was a man of prodigious bone and sinews. At throwing the hammer, at putting the stone, no man could stand before him. He distanced all who came against him; and, while he did so, he seemed to put forth not half his strength, while his skill appeared equal to the power of his arm.

Now, amongst the spectators of the sports, there stood one who was known for many miles around by the appellation of *Strong Andrew*. He was not so tall, by three inches, as the conqueror of the day; nor could he measure

with him either across the shoulders or around the chest; and, in fact, he was rather a thin man than otherwise, nor did he appear a powerful one—but his bones were well set. His sinews were all strength—they were not encumbered with flesh. He was as much a model of activity and suppleness, as Meikle Robin was of bodily power. Now, Andrew was a native of Eyemouth; he was about three and thirty years of age, and he united in his person the callings of a fisherman and cadger; or, in other words, Andrew, being without mother, sister, wife, or servant, sold himself the fish which he had caught. His domestic establishment consisted of a very large and a very wise water-dog, and a small pony; and with the last-mentioned animal he carried his fish around the country. For several days, and on the day in question, he had brought his store for sale to the camps or pavilions at Lamberton, where he had found a ready and an excellent market. There, as Andrew stood and witnessed the championship of Meikle Robin, his blood boiled within him; and, "Oh," thought he, "but if I had onybody that I could trust to take care o' the Galloway and my jacket, *and the siller*, but I wad take the conceit oot o' ye, big as ye are."

Andrew possessed his country's courage and its caution in equal proportions; and, like a wise man, he did not choose to trust his money by risking it to strangers. In such a motley company it would not be safe to do so now a-days; but it would have been much less so then. For, at that time, and especially on the Borders, the law of *mine* and *thine* was still imperfectly understood. But Andrew's determination to humble the champion was well-nigh overcoming his caution, when the former again stepped into the ring, and cast off his jacket for a wrestling bout. He stood looking round him for a minute; and it was evident that every one was afraid to enter the lists against him. Andrew could endure it no longer; and he was

saying—"Will ony person tak charge o' my Galloway?"——

When a young man of middle stature, and whose dress bespoke him to be a domestic of one of the noblemen who had come to witness the royal festival, and grace it with their presence, entered the lists. Without even throwing off his bonnet, he stretched out his arms to encounter the champion, who met him—somewhat after the fashion that Goliath met David—with contempt. But the first grasp of the stranger, as he seized his arms above the elbows, instead of throwing them round his waist (as was, and is the unscientific practice of the Borders), informed Robin that he had no common customer to deal with. Robin, as a wrestler, in a great measure trusted to mere strength and tripping. He knew nothing of turning an antagonist from his centre of gravity by a well-timed and well-directed touch. He therefore threw his arms around the back of his opponent (so far as the grasp which the other had got of them would permit), with the intention of giving him a "Hawick hug," but he found he could not join his hands together so as to effect his purpose, and his strength could not accomplish it. Ignorant of his antagonist's mode of attack, he had allowed him an advantage over him; and when he endeavoured to gain it by tripping his heels, the other suddenly changed his feet, favoured Robin with a "Devonian kick," and suddenly dashing his bended knee against his person, Robin lost his footing, and fell upon his back, with the stranger above him.

The spectators shouted; and Andrew, mounting his pony, exclaimed aloud—

"Weel dune, stranger—I'm as glad as though I had gotten a gowden coin."

Now, it is but justice to Andrew to say that he had repeatedly defeated Meikle Robin, both at wrestling, cud-

gel-playing, and every athletic exercise; but I shall give the reader an account of his having done so on one occasion in his own words, as it is necessary for the forwarding of our narrative.

Andrew went to Lamberton with his fish on the following day, and again he found a profitable market; and some words had again passed between him and Meikle Robin; but, as he was returning home, he overtook the stranger by whom Robin had been defeated.

"Losh, man!" said Andrew, pulling up his pony, "is this ye? I canna tell ye hoo glad I am to see ye, for I've dune naething but thocht o' ye ever since yesterday, when I saw ye tak the brag oot o' Meikle Robin, just as easily as I would bend a willy-wand. Now, I hope, sir, although ye are a stranger, ye no think ill o' my familiarity?"

"Think ill, comrade," said the other, "why should I do so?"

"Why, I watna," said Andrew, "but there seems to be sae mony kind o' butterflies getting about the court now, wi' their frills and their gold-laced jackets, from what I can judge o' their appearance for some days past on the Moor, that I wasna sure but it might be like-master like-man wi' ye, and I was uncertain how to speak to ye. I didna ken but that, in some things, ye might imitate your superiors, and treat a cadger body as though they hadna been o' the same flesh an blood wi' yoursel."

The stranger laughed, and repeated the adage—

"Why—the king may come in the cadger's way."

"Very true, sir," said Andrew, "and may find him a man mair like himsel than he imagines. But, sir, what I was gaun to say to you—and it is connected wi' your defeating o' Meikle Robin yesterday—(at least I wish to make it connected wi' it). Weel, just five days syne, I was at Lamberton—it was the very day after the royal party arrived—and Robin was there. Perhaps you was

there yoursel; but the tents were there, and the games, and the shows, and everything was going on just the same as ye saw them yesterday. But, as I was telling ye, Meikle Robin was there. Now, he gets the brag o' being the best cudgel-player, putter, and wrestler, in a' Berwickshire—and, between you and I, that is a character that I didna like to hear gaun past mysel. However, as I was saying, on the day after the royal party had come to the Moor, and the games were begun, he had the ball fairly at his foot, and fient a ane durst tak him up ava. He was terribly insulting in the pride o' his victoriousness, and, in order to humble him, some were running frae tent to tent to look for Strong Andrew—(that is me, ye observe; for they ca' me that as a sort o' nickname—though for what reason I know not). At last they got me. I had had a quegh or twa, and I was gay weel on—(for I never in my born days had had such a market for my fish; indeed, I got whatever I asked, and I was wishing in my heart that the king's marriage party would stop at Lammerton Moor for a twelvemonth)—but, though I had a drappie ower the score, Robin was as sober as a judge; for, plague tak him! he kenned what he was doing—he was ower cunnin to drink, and laid himsel out for a quarrel. It was his aim to carry the 'gree' ower a' upon the Moor at everything, that the king, who is said to be as fond o' thae sort o' sports as onybody, might tak notice o' him, and do something for him. There was a cowardliness in the very idea o' such conduct—it showed a fox's heart in the carcase o' a bullock. Weel, those that were seeking me got me, and clean off hand I awa to the tent where he was making a' his great braggadocio, and, says I to him, 'Robin,' says I, 'I'm your man at onything ye like, and for whatever ye like. I'll run ye—or, I'll jump ye—I'll putt the stone wi' ye—or, *I'll fight ye*—and, if ye like it better, I'll wrestle ye—or try ye at the cudgels—and dinna be cutting your

capers there ower a wheen callants.' Weel, up he got, and a ring was made aback o' the tent. He had an oak stick as thick as your wrist, and I had naething but the bit half switch that I hae in my hand the now, for driving up the Galloway. Mine was a mere bog-reed to his, independent o' its being fully six inches shorter—and, if ye ken onything about cudgelling, that was a material point. 'Od, sir, I found I couldna cope wi' him. My stick, or rather switch, was nae better than half a dozen o' rashes plaited together. 'Will ony o' ye lend me a stick, gentlemen?' cried I to the bystanders, while I keepit guarding him off the best way I could. Aboon a dozen were offered in an instant. I gript at the nearest. Now 'Heaven hae mercy on ye!' said I, and gied him a whissel beneath the elbow, and, before ye could say Jock Robison! cam clink across his knee. I declare to ye, sir, he cam spinning down like a totum. He talked nae mair o' wrestling, or cudgelling, or onything else that day. I settled him for four-and-twenty hours at ony rate. Weel, sir, I was perfectly delighted when I saw you lay him on the broad o' his back yesterday; and I had nae mair words wi' him, frae the day that I humbled him, until about four hours syne, when I met in wi' him on the Moor, amang three or four o' his cronies, at his auld trade o' boasting again. I had nae patience wi' him. But he had a drop ower meikle, and, at ony rate, I thought there could be nae honour in beating the same man twice. But, says I to him 'Ye needna craw sae loud, for, independent o' me bringing ye to the ground at cudgelling, and making ye no worth a doit, I saw a youngster that wrestled wi' ye yesterday, twist ye like a barley-strae.' And, to do him justice, sir, he didna attempt to deny it, but said that ye wud do the same by me, if I would try ye, and offered to back ye against ony man in the twa kingdoms. Now, sir, I looked about all the day in the crowd, just to see if I

could clap my een on ye, and to ask ye, in a friendly way, if ye would let me try what sort o' stuff ye are made o', but I couldna fall in wi' ye; and now I'm really glad that I hae met wi' ye—and as this is a gay level place here, and the ground is not very hard, what do ye say if we try a thraw, in a neighbourly way; and after that, we can cut a bit branch frae ane o' the allers, for a cudgelling bout. Ye will really very particularly oblige me, sir, if ye will."

The stranger readily replied, "With all my heart, friend —be it so."

Andrew cast off his jacket and bonnet, and, throwing them on the ground, his large water-dog, which was called Cæsar, placed himself beside them.

"Dinna thraw till I get a grip," cried Andrew, as the stranger had him already lifted from his feet—"that's no fair—it's no our country way o' thrawing."

The request was granted, and only granted, when Andrew measured his length upon the ground, and his dog sprang forward to attack the victor.

"Get back, Cæsar!" shouted its master—"It was a fair fa', I canna deny it! Sorrow tak me if I thought there was a man in ten parishes could hae done the like! Gie's yer hand," said he, as he rose to his feet; "I'll thraw nor cudgel nae mair wi' you; but, as sure as my name's Andrew, I would bite my last coin through the middle, to gie ye the half o't, should ye want it. I like to meet wi' a good man, even though he should be better than mysel—and, in the particular o' wrestling, I allow that ye do bang me—though I dinna say how we might stand in other respects, for they've no been tried. But it was a fair fa'. 'Od, ye gied me a jirk as though I had been touched by lightning."

Before reaching Eyemouth, they came to a change-house by the wayside, which was kept by a widow, called Nancy

Hewitt; and who was not only noted on account of the excellence of the liquor with which she supplied her customers, but who also had a daughter, named Janet, whose beauty rendered her the toast of the countryside.

"I am always in the habit," said Andrew, "o' stopping here for refreshment, and, if ye hae nae objections, we'll toom a stoup together."

"Cheerily, cheerily," answered his companion.

The fair daughter of the hostess was from home when they entered, and Andrew inquired after her with a solicitude that bespoke something more between them than mere acquaintanceship. The stranger slightly intimated that he had heard of her, and, after a few seemingly indifferent questions respecting her, for a few minutes became silent and thoughtful.

"Hoot, man," said Andrew, "I am vexed to see ye sae dowie—gie cauld care a kick like a foot-ba'. This is nae time to be sad when the king is merry, and the country's merry, an' we're a' happy thegither. Cheer up, I say, man—what's the matter wi' ye?—care has a strange look on a body's shouthers at seven or eight and twenty; and I dinna think ye can be mair. I am on the wrang side o' three and thirty, and I would snap my fingers at it, were it blawing its breath in my face as snell as a drift on an open moor! Losh man! what ails ye? Ye would say I had met wi' a friar in orders grey, lamenting owre the sins o' the world, and the poverty o' his pocket, instead o' a young bang fellow like you, that's a match for onybody. Come, here's to the health o' bonny Jenny Hewitt."

"With all my heart," said the stranger; and, pronouncing the name of the fair maiden, quaffed off his liquor.

"Now, that's wiselike; there's some spirit in that," said Andrew, following his example; "let's be merry while we can; that's aye my creed. The ne'er a grain o' guid, as I

used to say to my mother, comes out o' melancholy. Let's hae a sang—I see you hae a singing face—or I'll gie ye ane mysel, to mak a beginning."

So saying, with a voice like thunder broken into music, he sang as follows:—

In our young, young days,
When the gowany braes
Were our temple o' joy and glee,
Some dour auld body would shake his head,
And tell us our gladness away would flee,
And our hearts beat as heavy as lead.
Stupid auld body—silly auld body—
His mother spained him wi' a canker-worm.
In our auld, auld days, the gowany braes
Are memory's rainbows owre time and storm.

In our proud young days,
When the gowany braes
Kenn'd the feet o' my love and me,
Some ill-matched carle would girn and say—
"Puir things! wi' a twalmonth's marriage, and ye
Will find love like a snaw-ba' decay."
Stupid auld carle—leein' auld carle—
His mother spained him wi' a canker-worm.
In our auld, auld days, like gowany braes,
Our love unchang'd, has its youthfu' form.

In our grey-haired days,
When the gowany braes
Are owre steep for our feet to climb—
When her back is bowed, and her lovely e'e,
Once bricht as a beam frae the sun, is dim—
She'll be still my bit lassie to me.
Stupid auld body—wicked auld body—
Love, like the gowan's a winter liver.
The smile o' a wife is the sun o' its life,
An' her bosom a brae where it blooms for ever.

A few minutes after Andrew had concluded his song, the fair daughter of their hostess entered the house. Andrew's

first glance bespoke the lover, and the smile with which she returned it showed that the young fisherman and cadger was not an unaccepted wooer.

"By my sooth, fair maiden," said the stranger, "and thy sweet face doesna belie its fame; admiration fails in painting the loveliness of thy glowing cheeks, and thine een might make a moonbeam blush!"

He seemed practised in the art of gallantry, and poured into her ear other compliments in a similar strain. She hung her head, and turned it aside from him, as a woman will when flattered, or when she wishes to be flattered, but she did not rise to depart; and he felt that the incense which he offered to her beauty was not unacceptable. But the words and the attentions of the stranger were as daggers in the ears, and as wormwood in the heart of Andrew.

"The mischief rive his smooth tongue out o' his head!" thought Andrew; "but though I hae nae chance in speaking balderdash wi' him, and though he did thraw me (and it was maybe by an unmanly quirk after a'), I'll let her see, if he has the glibest tongue, wha has the manliest arm!"

Neither love nor liquor, however, can allay the cravings of a hungry stomach, and the stranger (who evidently beguiled Andrew to drink more than the portion that ought to have fallen to him) called for something to eat, by way of a relish.

"O sir," said Nancy Hewitt, their hostess, "I'm verra sorry an' vexed that I hae naething in the house that I could gie ye—naething o' kitchen kind but the haddocks which Andrew left this forenoon; an' I hae been sae thrang wi' folk gaun back an' forret to Lamberton, that they're no gutted yet. But if ye could tak them, ye are welcome to them."

"Gut two, then, good dame, and prepare them," said the stranger.

"I doubt, sir, twa winna do," said she, "for they're but sma'—I had better gut thrie."

"Certainly, *gut thrie*," said Andrew; "I brought the stranger in—and what is a haddie, or what are they worth?" for Andrew was anxious that the attention of his companion should be turned to anything, were it only withdrawn from Janet's face.

"You are a generous-hearted fellow," said the stranger, "and *gut thrie* shall I call you, if we meet again."

Having therefore partaken of his repast, he proposed that they should again fill the stoup to friendship's growth; and although Andrew was wroth and jealous because of the words which he had spoken, and the attention he had shewn to fair Janet, he was not made of materials to resist the proposition to have another cup. But while they were yet drinking it, Andrew's pony, which had repeatedly raised its fore foot and struck it heavily on the ground, as if calling on its master to "come," being either scared, or its patience being utterly exhausted, set off at a canter from the door. He had rushed out without his bonnet, but, before he reached the road, it was fully forty yards a-head of him, and the louder he called on it, the nearer did the pony increase its pace to a gallop.

Andrew had scarce reached the door, when the stranger drew out a well-lined purse, and, after jerking it in his hand, he again replaced it in his pocket, and more boldly than before renewed his gallantries to fair Janet. Emboldened, however, by what he conceived to have been his recent success, he now overshot the mark; and, as Andrew again reached the house, he was aroused by the cries of—

"Mother! Mother!—O Andrew! Andrew!"

Old Nancy's voice, too, broke upon his ears at its highest scolding pitch; but he could only distinguish the word "Scoundrel!"

He rushed into the room, and there he beheld his own Janet struggling in the embrace of the stranger.

"Villain!" cried Andrew, and the other started round—but with our fisherman at all times it was but a word and a blow—and his blood, which before had been heated and fermenting, now boiled—he raised his hand and dealt a blow at his companion, which, before he could parry it, laid him prostrate on the floor.

"Base loon!" cried the stranger, starting to his feet, "ye shall rue that blow." And he flung off his bonnet as if to return it.

"Hooly, billy," said Andrew, "there is as little manliness in fighting afore women as there was in your conduct to my bit Janet. But naething will gie me mair satisfaction than a round wi' ye—so wi' a' my heart—come to the door, and the best man for it."

Blood was issuing from the lips of the stranger, but he seemed nothing loath to accompany his quondam friend to the door. Janet, however, flung her arms around Andrew, and the old woman stood between them, and implored them, for her sake, to keep the peace towards each other.

"O sir!" cried she, "let there be nae such carryings on in my house. My dochter and me are twa lone women, and the disgrace o' such an on-carrying, and at such a time, too, when the king an a' the gentry are in the neighbourhood, might be attended by there's nae saying what consequences to me and mine. Andrew, man, I wonder that ye haena mair sense."

"Sense!" returned Andrew, "I hae baith sense and feeling; and had it been the king himsel that I saw layin a hand upon my Janet, I would hae served him in the same way that I did that man."

"Ye brag largely and freely, neighbour," said the stranger; throwing down a noble upon the table to pay for his

entertainment; but we shall meet again, where there are no women to interfere."

"Tak up your gowd, sir," replied Andrew, "for though I can boast o' nae sic siller, coppers will pay for a' that we have had. I brought you in here to treat ye, and our quarrel shall make nae difference as to that. Sae put up your gowd again; and as to meeting ye—I will meet ye the night, the morn, at ony place, or at ony time."

"I shall ask ye to meet me before ye dare," said the stranger; and leaving the coin upon the table as he left the house, "the gowd," added he, "will buy a gown and a bodice for the bosom of bonny Janet."

"I insist, sir, that you tak back the siller," cried Andrew.

"Dearsake, Andrew," said old Nancy, "he's no offering it to you! It's no you that has ony richt to refuse it." And taking up the piece, she examined it with a look of satisfaction, turning it round and round in her fingers—wrapped it in a small piece of linen rag, which lay in a corner of the room, and mechanically slipped it into her pocket. But it was neither every day, every week, nor every year, that Nancy Hewitt saw a coin of gold.

On the third day after the encounter between Strong Andrew and the stranger, the last and great day of the festivities on Lamberton took place; for on that day the royal bride was to arrive. The summer sun ushered in a glorious morning—its beams fell as a sheet of gold on the broad ocean, melting down and chaining its waves in repose. To the south lay Lindisferne, where St. Cuthbert had wrought miracles, with the Ferne Isles where he lived, prayed, and died, and the proud rock on which King Ida reigned.* They seemed to sleep in the morning sunbeams—smiling in sleep. To the north was gigantic St. Abb's, stretching out into the sea, as if reposing on its breast; amidst their

* Bamborough.

feet and behind them, stretched the Moor and its purple heather; while, from the distance, the Cheviots looked down on them; and Hallidon, manured by the bones of slaughtered thousands, lay at their hand.

Yet, before sunrise, thousands were crowding to the gay scene, from every corner of Berwickshire, and from Roxburgh and the Eastern Lothian. The pavilions exhibited more costly decorations. Fair ladies, in their gayest attire, hung upon the arms of brave knights. An immense amphitheatre, where the great tourneyings and combats of the day were to take place, was seated round; and at one part of it was a richly canopied dais, where the young king, with his blooming queen, and the chief peers and ladies of both countries, were to sit, and witness the spectacle. Merry music reverbed in every direction, and the rocks and the glens re-echoed it; and ever and anon, as it pealed around, the assembled thousands shouted—"Long live our guid king James, and his bonny bride." Around the pavilions, too, strutted the courtiers with the huge ruffles of their shirts reaching over their shoulders—their scented gloves—flat bonnets, set on the one side of their heads like the cap of a modern dandy—spangled slippers, and a bunch of ribbons at their knees.

Amongst the more humble followers of the court, the immortal Dunbar, who was neglected in his own day, and who has been scarce less neglected and overlooked by posterity, was conspicuous. The poet-priest appeared to be a director of the intellectual amusements of the day. But although they delighted the multitude, and he afterwards immortalised the marriage of his royal master, by his exquisite poem of "The Thistle and the Rose," he was doomed to experience that genius could neither procure the patronage of kings nor church preferment; and, in truth, it was small preferment with which Dunbar would have been satisfied, for, after dancing the courtier in vain

(and they were then a race of beings of new-birth in Scotland), we find him saying—

> "Greit abbais graith I nill to gather
> But *ane kirk scant coverit with hadder*,
> *For I of lytil wald be fane.*"

But, in the days of poor Dunbar, church patronage seems to have been conferred somewhat after the fashion of our own times, if not worse, for he again says—

> "I knaw nocht how the kirk is gydit,
> But benefices are nocht leil divydit;
> Sum men hes sevin, and I nocht ane!"

All around wore a glad and a sunny look, and, while the morning was yet young, the sound of the salute from the cannon on the ramparts of Berwick, announced that the royal bride was approaching. The pavilions occupied a commanding situation on the heath, and the noble retinue of the princes could be observed moving along, their gay colours flashing in the sun, a few minutes after they issued from the walls of the town. A loud, a long, and a glad shout burst from the Scottish host, as they observed them approach, and hundreds of knights and nobles, dashing their glittering spurs into the sides of their proudly caparisoned steeds, rode forth to meet them, and to give their welcome, and offer their first homage to their future queen. There was a movement and a buzz of joy throughout the multitude; and they moved towards the ancient kirk.

The procession that accompanied the young princess of England into Scotland drew near; at its head rode the proud Earl of Surrey, the Earl of Northumberland, warden of the eastern marches, with many hundreds more, the flower of England's nobility and gentry, in their costliest array. In the procession, also, were thousands of the inhabitants of Northumberland; and the good citizens of

Berwick-upon-Tweed, headed by their captain, Lord Thomas Darcy, and the porter of their gates, Mr. Christopher Clapham, who was appointed one of the trustees on the part of the king of England, to see that the terms of his daughter's jointure were duly fulfilled.

There, however, was less eagerness on the part of the young monarch to behold his bride than on that of his subjects. We will not say that he had exactly imbibed the principles of a libertine, but it is well known that he was a *gallant* in the most *liberal* signification of the term, and that his amours extended to all ranks. He had, therefore, until he had well nigh reached his thirtieth year, evaded the curb of matrimony; and it was not until the necessity of his marriage, for the welfare of his country, was urged upon him by his nobles, that he agreed to take the hand of young Margaret of England. And of her it might have been truly said, that his

> "Peggy was a young thing,
> Just entering in her teens,"

for she had hardly completed her fourteenth year. But she was a well-grown girl, one on whom was opening the dawn of loveliest womanhood—she was beautiful, and the gentleness of her temper exceeded her beauty. Young James was the most chivalrous prince of his age: he worshipped beauty, and he could not appear coldly before one of the sex. And having come to the determination (though unwillingly) to give up his bachelorism, or, as he called it, liberty, he at length resolved to meet his bride as became one whose name was chronicled on the page of chivalry. He accordingly arrayed himself in a jacket of black velvet, edged with crimson, and the edgings bordered with a white fur. His doublet was of the finest satin, and of a violet colour; his spurs were of gold, his hose crimson, and precious stones bespangled his shirt-collar. The reiterated shouts of the multitude announced the approach of the

queen, and, thus arrayed, the young king rode forth to greet her.

He entered the kirk, at the further end of which stood his fair bride between the Earls of Surrey and Northumberland. He started, he seemed to pause as his eyes fell upon her, but in a moment they were again lighted up with more than their wonted lustre. He had heard of her loveliness, but report had failed in doing justice to the picture. He approached to where she stood—he sank upon his knee—he raised her hand to his lips. The English nobility were struck with admiration at the delicate gallantry of the Scottish king.

I need not enter into the particulars of the ceremony. The youthful monarch conducted his yet more youthful bride and her attendants to his pavilion, while the heralds summoned the knights to the tournament, and prepared the other sports of the day. He took his lute and performed before her, and he sang words of his own composition, which related to her—for, like others of his family that had gone before, and that came after him, James had a spark of poetry in his soul.

"And dost thou understand this instrument, my own love?" said he, handing her the lute.

She blushed, and, taking it in her hand, began to "discourse most eloquent music," and James, filled with admiration, again sinking on his knee, and clasping his hands together, remained in this attitude before her, until the trumpets of the heralds announced that the knights were in readiness for the tournament.

Thousands were crowded around the circle in which the knights were to exhibit their skill and prowess. The royal party took their seats on the dais prepared for them. Several trials of skill, with sword, spear, and battle-axe, had taken place, and the spectators had awarded to the successful competitors their shouts of approbation, when

the young king, who sat beside his queen, surrounded by the Lords Surrey and Northumberland, and the nobles of his kindred, together with the ladies of high degree, said—

"Troth, my lords, and whatever ye may think, they play it but coldly. Excuse me, your Majesty, for a few minutes," continued he, addressing his young bride; "I must put spirit into the spectacle."

Thus saying, the young monarch left the side of his bride, and, for a time, the same breaking of swords, spears, and battle-axes continued, when the chief herald of the tournament announced the SAVAGE KNIGHT. He entered the lists on foot, a visor concealing his face, arrayed as an Indian chief. He was clothed in a skin fitting tightly to his body, which gave half of it the appearance of nudity. In his left hand he held a javelin, in his right hand he brandished a spear.

"Who is he?" was the murmur that rang through the crowd; but no one could tell, and the knights in the area knew not. He walked towards the centre of the circle—he raised his spear—he shook it in defiance towards every knight that stood around—and they were there from England as well as from Scotland. But they seemed to demur amongst themselves who should first measure their strength with him. Not that they either feared his strength or skill, but that, knowing the eccentricity of the king, they apprehended that the individual whom he had sent against them, in such an uncouth garb, and who was to hold combat with them at such extravagant odds, they being on horseback, while he was on foot, might be no true knight, but some base-born man whom the monarch had sent against them for a jest's sake. But, while they communed together, the *Savage Knight* approached near where they stood, and, crying to them, said—

"What is it ye fear, Sir Knights, that ye hold consulta-

tion together. Is it my mailed body, or panoplied steed? —or fear ye that my blood is base enough to rust your swords? Come on, ye are welcome to a trial of its colour."

Provoked by his taunt, several sprang from their horses, and appeared emulous who should encounter him. But, at the very onset, the Savage Knight wrested the sword of the first who opposed him from his hand. In a few minutes the second was in like manner discomfited, and, after a long and desperate encounter, the third was hurled to the ground, and the weapon of the wild knight was pointed to his throat. The spectators rent the air with acclamations. Again the unknown stood in the midst of the circle, and brandished his spear in defiance. But enough had been seen of his strength and his skill, and no man dared to encounter him. Again the multitude shouted more loudly, and he walked around the amphitheatre, bowing lowly towards the spectators, and receiving their congratulations.

Now, in the midst of the motley congregation, and almost at the point farthest removed from the dais of royalty, stood none other than Strong Andrew, with bonny Janet under his arm; and it so happened, that when the Savage Knight was within view of where Andrew stood, his visor fell, and, though it was instantly replaced, it enabled our sturdy fisherman to obtain a glance of his countenance, and he exclaimed—

"'Od save us, Janet, woman, look, look look!—do ye see wha it is! Confound me, if it isna the very chield that I gied the clout in the lug to in your mother's the other night for his good behaviour. Weel, as sure as death, I gie him credit for what he has done—he's ta'en the measure o' their feet, onyway! A knight!—he's nae mair a knight than I'm ane—but it shows that knights are nae better than other folk."

There was a pause for a short space—again the monarch

sat upon the dais by the side of his blooming bride. The great spectacle of the day was about to be exhibited. This spectacle was a battle in earnest between an equal number of Borderers and Highlanders. The heralds and the marshals of the combat rode round the amphitheatre, and proclaimed that rewards would be bestowed on all who signalized themselves by their courage, and to the most distinguished a purse of gold would be given by the hands of the king himself. Numbers of armed clansmen and Borderers entered the area. Andrew's fingers began to move, and his fists were suddenly clenched, relaxed, and clenched again. He began to move his shoulders also. His whole body became restless, and his soul manifested the same symptoms, and he half involuntarily exclaimed—

"Now, here's a chance!"

"Chance for what, Andrew dear?" inquired Janet, tremulously—for she knew his nature.

"To mak a fortune in a moment," returned he, eagerly —"to be married the morn! The king is to gie a purse o' gold!"

Now, the only obstacle that stood between the immediate union of Andrew and Janet was his poverty.

"Oh, come awa, Andrew, love," said she, imploringly, and pulling his arm as she spoke; "I see your drift!—come awa—come awa—we have seen enough. Dinna be after ony sic nonsense, or thrawing awa your life on sic an errand."

"Wheesht, Janet, hinny—wheesht," said he; "dinna be talking havers. Just stand you here—there's not the smallest danger—I'll be back to ye in ten minutes or a quarter of an hour at the utmost—ye may tak my word upon that."

"Andrew!" cried she, "are ye out o' yer mind a'thegither—or do ye want to put me out o' mine! I really think it looks like it! O man, would ye be guilty o' mur-

dering yoursel, I may say!—come awa—come awa, dear —for I'll no stand to see it."

"Hoot, Janet, hinny," returned he, "come, dear, dinna be silly."

Now, the number of the Highland party was completed, and they stood, a band of hardy, determined, and desperate-looking men; but the party of the Borderers was one deficient.

"Is there not another," cried the herald, "to stand forth, and maintain with his sword the honour and courage of the Borders?"

"Yes! here am I!" shouted Andrew, and drawing Janet's arm from his; "now, dearest," added he, hastily, "just hae patience—just stand here for ten minutes—and I'll let ye see what I can do."

She would have detained him; but in a moment he sprang into the amphitheatre, and exclaimed—

"Now, Sir Knights, ye that hae been trying yer hands at the tourneyings, will ony o' ye hae the guidness to obleege me wi' the loan o' yer sword for a wee while, and I'll be bond for ye I'll no disgrace it—I'll try the temper o' it in earnest."

Andrew instantly had a dozen to choose upon; and he took his place amongst the Borderers.

When he joined them, those who knew him, said—"The day is ours—Andrew is a host in himsel."

The marshals gave the signal for the onset; and a deadly, a savage onset it was. Swords were shivered to the hilt. Men, who had done each other no wrong, who had never met before, grasped each other by the throat—the Highland dirk and the Border knife were drawn. Men plunged them into each other—they fell together—they rolled, the one over the other, in the struggles and the agonies of death. The wounded strewed the ground—they strove to crawl from the strife of their comrades.

The dead lay upon the dying, and the dying on the dead. Death had reaped a harvest from both parties; and no man could tell on which side would lie the victory. Yet no man could stand before the sword-arm of Andrew—antagonist after antagonist fell before him. He rushed to every part of the combat; and wheresoever he went, the advantage was in favour of the Borderers. He was the champion of the field—the hero of the fight. The king gave a signal (perhaps because his young queen was horrified with the game of butchery), and at the command of the marshals the combatants on both sides laid down their arms. Reiterated shouts again rang from the spectators. Some clapped their hands and cried—"Eyemouth yet!"—"Wha's like Andrew!"—"We'll carry him hame shouther high!" cried some of his townsmen.

During the combat, poor Janet had been blind with anxiety, and was supported in the arms of the spectators who saw him rush from her side. But as the shouts of his name burst on her ear, consciousness returned; and she beheld him, with the sword in his hand, hastening towards her. Yet ere he had reached where she stood, he was summoned, by the men-at-arms, who had kept the multitude from pressing into the amphitheatre, to appear before the king, to receive from his hands the promised reward.

Anxious as he had been to obtain the prize, poor Andrew, notwithstanding his heroism, trembled at the thought of appearing in the presence of a monarch. His idea of the king was composed of imaginings of power, and greatness, and wisdom, and splendour—he knew him to be a man, but he did not think of him as such. And he said to those who summoned him to the royal presence—

"Oh, save us a', sirs! what shall I say to him? or what will he say to me? How shall I behave? I would rather want the siller than gang wi' ye!"

In this state of tremor and anxiety, Andrew was con-

ducted towards the canopied dais before the Majesty of Scotland. He was led to the foot of the steps which ascended to the seat where the monarch and his bride sat. His eyes were riveted to the ground, and he needed not to doff his bonnet, for he had lost it in the conflict.

"Look up, brave cock o' the Borders," said the monarch; "certes, man, ye would hae an ill-faured face if ye needed to hide it, after exhibiting sic a heart and arm."

Andrew raised his head in confusion; but scarce had his eyes fallen on the countenance of the king, when he started back, as though he beheld the face of a spirit.

"Ha! traitor! exclaimed the monarch, and a frown gathered on his brow.

In a moment, Andrew perceived that his victor-wrestler —his crony in Lucky Hewitt's—the tempter of his Janet—the man whom he had felled with a blow, and whose blood he had drawn—and the King of Scotland, was one and the same person.

"Guid gracious!" exclaimed Andrew, "I'm a done man!"

"Seize him!" said the king.

But ere he had said it, Andrew recollected that if he had a good right hand, he had a pair of as good heels; and if he had trusted to the one a few minutes before, he would trust to the latter now, and away he bounded like a startled deer, carrying his sword in his hand.

A few seconds elapsed before the astonished servants of the king recovered presence of mind to pursue him. As he fled, the dense crowd that encircled the amphitheatre surrounded him; but many of them knew him—none had forgotten his terrible courage—and, although they heard the cry re-echoed by the attendants of the monarch to seize him, they opened an avenue when he approached,

and permitted him to rush through them. Though, perhaps, the fear of the sword which he brandished in his hand, and the terrible effects of which they had all witnessed, contributed not less than admiration of his courage, to procure him his ready egress from amongst them.

He rushed towards the sea-banks, and suddenly disappeared where they seemed precipitous, and was lost to his pursuers; and after an hour's search, they returned to the king, stating that they had lost trace of him, and could not find him.

"Go back, ye bull-dogs!" exclaimed our monarch, angrily; "seek him—find him—nor again enter our presence until ye again bring him bound before us at Holyrood."

They therefore again proceeded in quest of the unfortunate fugitive; and the monarch having conducted his royal bride to the pavilion, cast off his jacket of black velvet, and arrayed himself in one of cloth of gold, with edgings of purple and of sable fur. His favourite steed, caparisoned to carry two, and with its panoply embroidered with jewels, was brought before his pavilion. The monarch approached the door, leading his queen in his hand. He lightly vaulted into the saddle—he again took the hand of his bride, and placed her behind him; and in this manner, a hundred peers and nobles following in his train, the King of Scotland conducted his young queen through the land, and to the palace of his fathers. The people shouted as the royal cavalcade departed, and Scotch and English voices joined in the cry of—"Long live Scotland's king and queen." Yet there were some who were silent, and who thought that poor Andrew the fisherman, the champion of the day, had been cruelly treated, though they knew not his offence. Those who knew him, said—

"It bangs a'! we're sure Andrew never saw the king

in his life before. He never was ten miles out o' Eyemouth in his days. We ha'e kenned him since a callant, and never heard a word laid against his character. The king must hae taken him for somebody else—and he was foolish to run for it."

But, while the multitude shouted, and joined in the festivities of the day, there was one that hurried through the midst of them, wringing her hands, and weeping as she went—even poor Janet. At the moment when she was roused from the stupefaction of feeling produced by the horrors of the conflict, and when her arms were outstretched to welcome her hero, as he was flying to them in triumph, she had seen him led before his prince, to receive his praise and his royal gifts; but, instead of these, she heard him denounced as a *traitor*, as the king's words were echoed round. She beheld him fly for safety, and armed men pursuing him. She was bewildered—wildly bewildered. But every motion gave place to anguish; and she returned to her mother's house alone, and sank upon her bed, and wept.

She could scarce relate to her parent the cause of her grief; but others, who had been witnesses of the regal festival, called at Widow Hewitt's for refreshment, as they returned home, and from them she gathered that her intended son-in-law had been the champion of the day; but that, when he had been led forward to receive the purse from the hands of the king, the monarch, instead of bestowing it, denounced him as a traitor; "and when he fled," added they, "his majesty ordered him to be brought to him dead or alive!"—for, in the days of our fathers, men used the *license* that is exemplified in the fable of the Black Crows, quite as much as it is used now. The king certainly had commanded that Andrew should be brought to him; but he had said nothing of his being brought *dead*.

Nancy lifted her hands in astonishment as high as her ceiling (and it was not a high one, and was formed of rushes)—"Preserve us, sirs!" said she, "ye perfectly astonish me athegither! Poor chield! I'm sure Andrew wadna harm a dog! A *traitor!* say ye, the king ca'ed him? That's something very bad, isn't it? An' surely—na, na, Andrew couldna be guilty o't—the king maun be a strange sort o' man."

But, about midnight, a gentle knocking was heard at the window, and a well-known voice said, in an under tone—

"Janet! Janet! it is me!"

"It is *him* mother! it is Andrew! they haena gotten him yet!" And she ran to the door and admitted him; and, when he had entered, she continued, "O Andrew! what, in the name o' wonder, is the meaning o' the king's being in a passion at ye? What did ye say or do to him?—or what can be the meaning o't?"

"It is really very singular, Andrew," interrupted the old woman; "what *hae* ye done?—what *is really the meaning o't?*"

"Meaning!" said Andrew, "ye may weel ask that! I maun get awa' into England this very night, or my life's no worth a straw; and it's ten chances to ane that it may be safe there. Wha is the king, think ye?—now, just think wha?"

"Wha *is* the king!" said Nanny, with a look, and in a tone of astonishment—"I dinna comprehend ye, Andrew—what do ye mean? Wha can the king be, but just the king."

"Oh!" said Andrew, "ye mind the chield that cam here wi' me the other night, that left the gowd noble for the three haddies that him and I had atween us, and that I gied a clout in the haffets to, and brought the blood ower his lips, for his behaviour to Jenny!—*yon was the king!*"

"Yon the king!" cried Janet.

"Yon the king!" exclaimed her mother; "and hae I really had the king o' Scotland in my house, sitting at my fireside, and cooked a supper for him! Weel, I think, yon the king! Aha! he's a bonny man!"

"O mother!" exclaimed Janet; bonny here, bonny there, dinna talk sae—he is threatening the life o' poor Andrew, who has got into trouble and sorrow on my account. Oh, dear me! what shall I do, Andrew!—Andrew!" she continued, and wrung her hands.

"There's just ae thing, hinny," said he; "I must endeavour to get to the other side o' the Tweed, before folk are astir in the morning; so I maun leave ye directly, but I just ventured to come and bid ye fareweel. And there's just ae thing that I hae to say and to request, and that is, that, if I darena come back to Scotland to marry ye, that ye will come owre to England to me, as soon as I can get into some way o' providing for ye. Will ye promise, Jenny?"

"O yes! yes, Andrew!" she cried, "I'll come to ye—for it is entirely on my account that ye've to flee. But I'll do mair than that; for this very week I will go to Edinburgh, and I will watch in the way o' the king and the queen, and on my knees I'll implore him to pardon ye; and, if he refuses, I ken what I ken."

"Na, na, Jenny dear," said he, "dinna think o' that—I wad rather suffer banishment, and live in jeopardy for ever, than that ye should place yoursel in his power or in his presence. But what do ye ken, dear?"

Ken!" replied she; "if he refuses to pardon ye, I'll threaten to tell the queen what he said to me, and what offers he made to me when ye was running out after the powny."

Andrew was about to answer her, when he started at a heavy sound of footsteps approaching the cottage.

"They are in search o' me!" he exclaimed.

Instantly a dozen of armed men entered the cottage.

"We have found him," cried they to their companions without; "the traitor is here."

Andrew, finding that resistance would be hopeless, gave up the sword which he still carried, and suffered them to bind his arms. Jenny clung round his neck and wept. Her mother sat speechless with terror.

"Fareweel, Jenny, dear!" said Andrew—"fareweel!—Dinna distress yoursel sae—things mayna turn out sae ill as we apprehend. I can hardly think that the king will be sae cruel and sae unjust as to tak my life. Is that no your opinion, sirs?" added he, addressing the armed men.

"We are not to be your judges," said he who appeared to be their leader; "ye are our prisoner, by his Majesty's command, and that is a' we ken about the matter. But ye are denounced as a traitor, and the king spares nane such."

Poor Janet shrieked as she heard the hopeless and cruel words, and again cried—

"But the queen shall ken a'!"

Jenny's arms were rudely torn from around his neck, and he was dragged from the house; and his arms, as I have stated, being bound, he was placed behind a horseman, and his body was fastened to that of the trooper. In this manner he was conducted to Edinburgh, where he was cast into prison to await his doom.

Within two days, Janet and her mother were seized also, at the very moment when the former was preparing to set out to implore his pardon—and accused of harbouring and concealing in their house one whom the king had denounced as guilty of treason.

Janet submitted to her fate without a murmur, and only said—"Weel, if Andrew be to suffer upon my account, I

am willing to do the same for his. But surely neither you nor the king can be sae cruel as to harm my poor auld mother!"

"Oh, dear! dear!" cried the old woman to those who came to apprehend her—"Was there ever the like o' this seen or heard tell o'! Before I kenned wha the king was, I took him to be a kind lad and a canny lad, and he canna say but I showed him every attention, and even prevented Andrew from striking him again; and what gratification can it be to him to tak awa the life o' a lone widow, and a bit helpless lassie?"

But, notwithstanding her remonstrances, Nancy Hewitt and her beautiful daughter were conducted as prisoners to the metropolis.

On the fourth day of his confinement, Andrew was summoned before King James and his nobles, to receive his sentence and undergo its punishment. The monarch, in the midst of his lords, sat in a large apartment in the castle; armed men, with naked swords in their hands, stood around, and the frown gathered on his face as the prisoner was led into his presence.

Andrew bowed before the monarch, then raised his head and looked around, with an expression on his countenance which showed that, although he expected death, he feared it not.

"How now, ye traitor knave!" said the king, sternly; "do ye deny that ye raised your hand against our royal person?"

"No!" was the brief and bold reply of the dauntless fisherman.

"Ye have heard, kinsmen," continued the monarch, "his confession of his guiltiness from his own lips—what punishment do ye award him?"

"Death! the traitor's doom!" replied the nobles.

"Nay, troth," said James, "we shall be less just than

merciful; and because of his brave bearing at Lamberton, his life shall be spared—but, certes, the hand that was raised against our person shall be struck off.—Prepare the block!"

Now, the block was brought into the midst of the floor, and Andrew was made to kneel, and his arm was bared and placed upon it—and the executioner stood by with his drawn sword, waiting the signal from the king to strike off the hand, when the fair young queen, with her attendants, entered the apartment. The king rose to meet her, saying—

"What would my fair queen?"

"A boon! a boon! my liege," playfully replied the blooming princess; "that ye strike not off the hand of this audacious man, but that ye chain it for his life."

"Be it so, my fair one," said the king; and, taking the sword of the executioner in his hand, he touched the kneeling culprit on the shoulder with it, saying—"Rise up Sir Andrew Gut-thrie, and thus do we chain your offending hand!"—the young queen at the same moment raised a veil with which she had concealed the features of bonny Janet, and the king taking her hand, placed it in Andrew's.

"My conscience!" exclaimed Andrew, "am I in existence!—do I dream, or what?—O Jenny, woman!—O your Majesty!—what shall I say?"

"Nothing," replied the monarch, "but the king cam' in the cadger's way—and Sir Andrew Gut-thrie and his bonny bride shall be provided for."

THE ROYAL RAID.

Among the promoters of the wars and disturbances which so long ravaged the Border counties, authors have been anxious to class prominently the tender sex; not, however, in the way in which it was imputed to these fair assuagers of man's misfortunes, that they shed the blood of knights, in the times of Froissart. A whole book has been penned—and another might follow it—on the wars and dissensions produced by beautiful women; and, without mounting upwards to Eve, it has been thought very well to begin with the maiden of Troy, who produced the most spirited piece of knight-errantry that ever was acted on the stage of the world. But, in almost every case on record, it was the beauty of the fair disturbers, that, inflaming the spirit of rivalship, set men a-fighting with so much zeal; and true it seems to be, that, when beauty went into disrepute, and gunpowder came into fashion—both much about the same time—we have never had what may be called a *bona fide* heroic battle. But the part which the Border fair ones had in the bloody scenes of that distracted section of the country, is represented to have been very different. The housewife, in those times, served up to her hungry lord, under an imposing dish, a pair of spurs; and this is represented as having been the gentle mode by which the dame intimated that it was necessary for her lord to supply the larder. The Flower of Yarrow herself did not disdain to stimulate, in this way, the foraying spirit of old Harden. But we have good authority that there were beautiful exceptions from this barbarous practice; and, among these, we may safely place the unfortu-

nate lady of Cockburn of Henderland, the fair subject of the pathetic ballad of "The Border Widow"—a strain which, so long as poetry shall hold any influence over the heart of man, will continue to draw "soft pity's tear." If every Border chieftain's wife had been like this lady, we would have heard and read less of raids and robberies: the dish of spurs, that sent their lords to the foray, would have been exchanged for the soft embracing arms of affection, applied to keep them at home; and the blessings of domestic peace would have harmonized with and softened the spirits which a love of riot and rapine inflamed into excesses so often ending in death. We have wept over her grave; and who that has seen the old stone in Henderland churchyard—now broken in three pieces, but bearing still that epitaph which Longinus would have pronounced sublime, "Here lies Parys of Cockburn, and his wife Marjory"—and looked on the old ruins of their castle, now scarcely sufficient for a restingplace for the grey owl—could resist the rising emotion, or quell the heaving breast of pity? There lie Parys of Cockburn, and his wife Marjory! How little does that simple chronicle tell! and yet, how much! The eloquence of that pregnant negative of ultra-simplicity, is felt by those who know their fate; but how many have trod on the three parts of the broken tombstone, deciphered the divided syllables, and walked on, and never inquired who was Parys of Cockburn, or Marjory his wife! Their bones have long mouldered into the dust that now feeds a few wild alpine plants; their tombstone is a broken ruin, and will soon pass away; their castle, at a few paces' distance, is also a ruin of a few black, weathered stones; and the land they were proud to call their own, dignifies another name. The sculptor has failed, but the poet has succeeded; and time may flap his dark pinion in vain over the deserted churchyard of Henderland.

The Cockburns of Henderland were an old family of Selkirkshire. Long before the estate passed into the hands of strangers, we find the name and title holding a respectable place among the lists of chieftains that held a divided rule on the Borders. Those who have gratified themselves, as we have done, by a view of St. Mary's Loch, and the classic streams of the Ettrick and Yarrow, cannot fail to have seen the old property of Henderland, situated on the Megget, a small stream that runs into the loch. That was once the seat of the Cockburns; but there is a sad change there now. In the time of Lesly the historian, the whole of the country round Henderland, and the property itself, were covered with wood, that afforded shelter to the largest stags in Scotland; and now, there is scarcely a single tree that rears its head for miles around. Not distant from the mansion-house of the present proprietor, the ruins of the old castellated residence of the Cockburns may be seen; and, in the deserted burying-ground that surrounded the chapel, there is the broken tombstone, recording the deaths of the last members of the family, in the simple terms we have already mentioned. These are the appearances presented now; but, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, Henderland was a close retreat, surrounded by wood and water. The family castle stood in the midst of a dense wood of firs, mixed, in those parts where the soil supported the king of the forest, with large oaks. The Megget, rolling along its brattling stream, to St. Mary's, was, when in its calm moods, made available for the ends of picturesque beauty; and, when swollen by the mountain rills, served as a defence to the grounds and residence. In building their strengths, all the Border chiefs had particular reference to the natural advantages of the situation: the middle of a morass, the edge of a precipice rising from a mountain torrent, or a small island in the midst of a lake or river, were held to be favoured

localities; and Selkirkshire, in curious accordance with the habits of the people, had and has no want of these natural strongholds. Henderland had, perhaps, less to boast of, in point of natural strength, than Tushielaw, Mangerton, and some other of the Border residences; but, in the beauty of its wooded scenery, and the picturesque effect of sleeping lochs and roaring torrents, it might not be excelled in all the Borders.

In the minority of James V., Henderland Tower was occupied by Parys (supposed to be a corrupted orthography of Paris) Cockburn. He was then comparatively a young man, and inherited, with the property of a Border chief, all the usual characteristics of that class of lairds—a natural, inborn valour being looked upon as the principal of all the qualities of the heart; and yet, unfortunately, applied, by a habit that had assumed the strength of an instinct, to the strife of contending families, the enterprises of pillage, and the contentions of a circumscribed ambition. There was no peculiarity of the Borderers more remarkable than the union of a high valour that would have immortalized many a knight within the palisades, and the habit of overturning the rights of property—descending even to the grade of petty larceny. Now-a-days, theft and cowardice are generally supposed to be nearly allied; but, in those days, the chief of a large clan, inhabiting a stately castle, and famous for a noble courage throughout the land, could pause, in the progress homewards, with half-a-dozen of his neighbour's kine; look, with a furacious eye, on a bundle of hay, and regret, in his heart, that it had not four legs like a cow, by which he could make it steal itself home to his semi-baronial residence.* These apparently inconsistent and opposite qualities were possessed by the laird of Henderland. There was not in all Liddesdale a nobler champion of the rights

* The old story of Scott of Harden and the hay sow, is well known.

of war; and few there were that entered more keenly into the spirit of enterprise, to take from his neighbour a fat steer, and then fight, as nobly as ever did King Robert for a lost kingdom, in defence of his horned prey. The riever in Cockburn was, however, a character of mere habit; for he possessed qualities of heart and mind which raised him far above the Border chiefs with whom he was usually ranked. He could fight to the effusion of blood that came from within an inch of the coronary veins of his heart, for the property of a cow, that, next day, he would divide among the poor; and he was often heard to say, that, if Henderland had been among "the Lowdens," he would have been a gay courtier, a supporter of the throne, and a friend of the poor, if not the king's almoner himself. In addition to these qualities, he carried a noble figure, and an open, intelligent countenance, that expressed the feelings of a heart as susceptible of the social affections as it was of the emotions that produced his lawless enterprises.

The interior of Henderland Castle, at this time, was graced by the presence of one of the fairest of women, and the most dutiful and affectionate of wives. The lot of Marjory Scott, the wife of Cockburn, was, indeed, in all respects, save in the possession of a husband she loved devotedly, unfortunately cast; because, in person, mind, and heart, she was formed for gracing the polished drawing-room of refined and civilized life, and imparting to the nursery the charm of a soft, kind, and doting mother, whose love of strict moral discipline was only one phase of her maternal affection. Become the wife of a Border chief from the force of an irresistible early passion, she was as much the domesticated lover of in-door enjoyments, the cultivator of the social affections, and the admirer of love and tranquillity, as if she had occupied a retreat in Arcadia. She had brought her husband three children, all as fair as herself, one girl and two boys, whom she, in playful kind-

ness, declared she would rear in the fear of God, the love of man, and the hearty hatred of Border rieving in all its gradations, from the laird's enforcing of blackmail, to the prowess of the laird's Jock, whose depredations extended to the minutiæ of Laverna's sacrifices :—

"Baith hen and cock,
And reel and rock,
The laird's Jock
All with him takes."

She had early entertained the expectation that she would cure her husband of his Border practices; and, though she had not as yet succeeded in that hope, she had placed before him such a picture of domestic bliss, in the working influences of all the finer and higher sentiments, seen and heard in the acts and speech of every member of his little family, that he became daily more reconciled to her views of the happiness of life, at the same time that he could not resist the heart-stirring stimulus of a raid, to give him, as he said with a smile, a higher relish for his domestic enjoyments.

A fine family picture, preserved as a legend of the house of Henderland, represents Cockburn and Marjory sitting beneath an immense elm, the only tree of that kind near the castle, and rendered curious on another account, with their three children beside them, engaged in swinging from its branches, and other gambols of innocent childhood. The anxious wife had, for a time, succeeded in her endeavours to keep her husband at home; but, latterly, some indications, on the part of the chief's retainers, having been caught by her vigilant eye, she dreaded another outbreak of that daring spirit which she had not yet been able effectually to quell.

"It will not conceal, Parys," said she, "that there are yet in this bosom, where your Marjory's head has sought the refuge of love, frightened by war, some embers of your

old spirit ready to flame again. Is it not so? Love hath sharp eyes. It is not for stag-hunting that your followers are stringing their bows. The love of your old pastime, like that of an old concealed passion, will act in such a manner as defieth all the art of concealment. I noticed, last night, as you spoke to Scott's John, who was booming his bow to show the power of the cord, that the sound went to your heart. Tushielaw oweth you a debt of vengeance. Is it not so? Come, now, confess that it is not for nothing that the old sword points have been risped on the sharping-stone on the ballium?"

"Tush, Marjory!" replied Cockburn, "you alarm the ear of the watchful Helen, who suspendeth her play to listen to her mother's fears. Such is thy training, that our young Hector will lose Henderland before the sods have grown together over his father's grave, in that small burying ground around our chapel. And you have unmanned me too, Maudge. You have much to answer for to the manes of the old Cockburns, who lie sleeping in their quiet beds there, after a jolly life of sturdy stouthrieving from Yarrow to the Esk. What would the laird of Gilnockie say if he heard that Cockburn's bairns were taught to read—ay, and to play on harpsichords, and teylins, and dulcimers. By my faith, Maudge, but he would laugh a good laugh."

"And yet," answered she, "I have seen the clear drop shining in her father's eye as Helen touched the strings to the soft melodies of Auld Scotland. Come, now, Parys, was not that sweet dream dearer to ye than the fever of the strife of Border foray?"

"Ay, Maudge," responded he, "I confess that you have taught me that there is more in man's heart than he himself dreams of. I once thought that the highest of human enjoyments was a victory lost and won, with a hundred head of cattle driven before the returning host, in triumph,

to Henderland; but, in yon withdrawing-room in the west wing, in which your cunning hands have placed the seductive couch, where one may lie and see roses blooming so near that he may smell their odours, and hear witching strains stealing from these musical things of wood and wire, the charm of the foray is broken, and the riever's spirit overcome. I wish I saw old Mangerton twisting his leathern cheeks under these arts of domestic peace. Every tear would have its avenging oath. He would trow old Henderland turret bewitched."

"But you have cunningly led me away from my subject, Parys. Is it not true that you are to cut through my silken bands with the restless sword? Are you not again to turn the fearless eye of the eagle on the cliff where Tushielaw hangs like a beetling crag? Is Helen's song to be changed for the raven war-cry; and the blessings of our peaceful household, for the curses of revengeful war?"

"How high mounteth Hector on my grandfather's elm!" responded Cockburn, playfully, evading her question. "The fearless rogue will hang himself, and realize the prophecy of Merlin the wild, regarding our house—

> 'On Cockburn's elm, on Henderland lee,
> A Cockburn laird shall hangit be.'"

"God forfend!" ejaculated Marjory. "Hector, undo that cord, and descend. My ears ring with old Lailoken's prophetic rhyme, when I look on that swing. I shall have it removed."

"Ha ha!" cried Cockburn, laughing, and glad to get rid of the original topic. "Don't you know, Mause, that my grandsire was a dabbler in phrophetic visions; and, think ye, he would have been fool enough to plant and water, as he is said to have done, his descendant's wuddy? But I have a good mind to cut down the tree, and make Lailoken's prophecy a physical impossibility."

As Cockburn spoke, he cast his eye wistfully to the sky, as if he felt an anxiety as to the state of the weather, an act which did not escape the observation of his wife, on whom the allusion to Merlin's prophecy, generally current at that time, had produced an effect not remarkable at a period when this species of soothsaying still retained the credit it had acquired by the success of the poet of Ercildoun. At another time, her strong mind would not have acknowledged the power of the rythmic ravings of a wandering maniac; but she had got some obscure hints of the wrath of the young King James V. against the Border chiefs; and the tender solicitude of a doting wife traced, by a process perhaps unknown to herself, some connection between Merlin's saying and the proof she now had of a concealed intention, on the part of Cockburn, to disregard all her efforts to reclaim him, by imbuing his mind with a perception of the pleasures of domestic happiness, from his old habits of rieving and fighting with his neighbours.

"It is—it is, Parys," she exclaimed, with a trembling voice—"It is too true that you are bent on the execution of your old threat against Tushielaw. I have an accumulation of proofs against you, and can read it even in your countenance. Do you love me, Parys?—say if you have any love for your Marjory—say if your affection is changed towards those dear pledges of our happiness, who, enjoying the sports of their age, are unconscious that their father is meditating that which may, ere the morn's sun gild those woods, render them fatherless, and bring sorrow o'er the house of Henderland? There are two dangers awaiting you: Tushielaw's arm, that has incarnadined the waters of Ettrick with the blood of many a proud foe; and the vengeance of King James, whose youthful fire his nobles, they say, cannot quell."

"This is not the cry of 'houghs in the pot,' Marjory," replied he, still laughing—"the hint of the Border chief-

tains' wives, when they want more beef for the larder. But calm ye, love. Young James will not travel hither to fulfil old Lailoken's rhyme, and Tushielaw's arm hath no power over Cockburn. Truly, I do intend to weed thy pretty arbours, Maudge; and, peradventure, I may even essay to sing a bass to thy sweet ballad of "Lustye May, with Flora Queen;" and such a domesticated creature shall I be that, like Hercules, you may see me, ere long, ply the distaff—a pretty sight for Adam Scott's warlike eye."

Cockburn's merriment fell with a lurid glare over the heart of his wife, who, seeing him determined to cover his designs by light raillery, replied nothing; but, calling to her her three children, kissed them, and bade them set aside their sports, and return with her to the Castle. As they passed along, Cockburn still cast a wistful eye to the skies, which wore a threatening aspect—the sun having been surrounded in his setting with large folds of clouds, whose bellying forms came dipping near the mountains; while the pale form of the moon, scarcely distinguishable in the falling gloaming, seemed to be sailing through broken masses of vapour, like a labouring bark in a stormy sea; and, now and then, a deep hollow moan among the woods came on the ear, like the far echo of dying thunder. About the Castle, the followers of Cockburn were observed, by the anxious eye of Marjory, to be all secretly employed in repairing their arms or habiliments—an occupation they threw aside, stealthily, when they saw their mistress; but not until she had observed what they had thus endeavoured to conceal. Their countenances exhibited that mixture of repressed joy and affected seriousness which the expectation of being gratified by a luxury from which the heart has long been debarred by some external power, produces in the presence of one hostile to the gratification. So strong was the desire of marauding and spoliation in that distracted part of the country, that an expedition was then

looked upon in nearly the light in which a fair, or maiden-feast, or penny-wedding, would be contemplated by more civilized revellers. These indications Marjory noticed; and, turning up her eyes in the face of her husband, she sighed heavily, and sought her apartment. Soon afterwards she proceeded to put her children to rest, making them offer up to heaven a prayer to avert from the head of their father a danger they did not understand; but enough to them, if they saw it in the face of their mother, whose looks were their laws, and whose smiles were the sunlight of their young hearts.

"This is a prettier sight," muttered she, in soft accents, as she looked upon the faces of the beautiful and innocent supplicants—"this is surely a fairer sight, and better calculated to fill and delight the heart of mortal, than what my Parys is now, I fear, preparing to behold. How different is the expression of the faces of these innocents, upturned to heaven in supplication and thankfulness, from the torch-flared countenances of blood and revenge which these retainers will turn on the heights of Tushielaw, in the presence of their master! Nor is my Parys insensible to this difference; but, wo for the force of education and habit over good hearts! Ask, my little Hector, of your Father in heaven that, if you live to be a Border chief, you may be loyal to your king, and a promoter of peace in the castle, and contentedness and happiness in the cottage."

The little embryo chieftain obeyed the words of his mother; and all looked up in her face anxiously, as they saw the tears stealing down her cheeks. Each asked the cause of her grief, and volunteered an assuagement, as if their little swelling hearts contained the power of the instant amelioration of her sorrow. She looked upon them in silence; and in a little time they were consigned to rest and sleep, and utter oblivion of all the cares of this world.

After these maternal cares, Marjory sat and listened to the proceedings in the ballium of the Castle. Cockburn did not come up, being either occupied in preparations for his expedition against Adam Scott, or unwilling to expose his designs again to the danger of defeat, by the expostulations or entreaties of his anxious wife. Meanwhile, as she listened, every whisper or accidental sound of sword or spear went to her heart, and stirred up, in confused array, the fears of love. One hope remained to her, that the moon would hide her head, and leave the world to the empire of darkness—so unfavourable to the designs of the riever, that the moon's minions would not fight under another power. There were clear indications in the heavens of a coming storm; for the moon still toiled on through the clouds, and the booming of the low, sullen wind in the woods was getting higher and higher. These sounds she hailed with hope; but, the next moment, the clang of a falling spear consigned her to her fears. At a late hour, Cockburn came up to his sleeping-room, and silently retired to pretended rest; while she, with her solicitude increased, retired also to her couch, but with no disposition to become oblivious of the fatal operations of her husband, though her tender nature forbade further efforts in a cause that seemed hopeless. Resigning herself to the powers of fear, and the other disquieting influences of the solemn hour of midnight, she lay quiet, and submitted to the current of inauspicious thoughts that flowed through her mind. A disturbed slumber fell over her, sufficient only to make a slight division between the world of dreams and that of reality, and to allow her waking thoughts to pass in new and changing forms before the eye of the dreaming fancy, which again, in its turn, invested them with attributes suitable to the complexion of her waking sorrows. During this interval, Cockburn rose; and, dressing himself, went quietly out of the chamber—his movements having only

tended to give some new impulse to her half-dreamy sensations, ineffectual as they were to recall her to the cares of a night vigil. A loud crash was the first sound that awoke her; and, opening her eyes, and becoming collected, she recognised, in the sharp sound, the grating fall of the portcullis. A shrill horn now winded among the woods, though its sound was scarcely distinguishable among the repressed bellowings of the night winds that seemed to have risen considerably since she had been overcome by her slumber. She was satisfied that the whole retinue, with her husband at their head, were off to the beetling Castle of Tushielaw, from whose heights so many a riever had been precipitated into the Ettrick.

This conviction, coming, as it did, on the back of a disturbed slumber, in which her dreams had partaken of the dire nature of a nightmare, increased her fears. She could rest no longer, and, rising and dressing herself, she sat down at the casement, and listened to ascertain if any of the sounds of the cavalcade could be distinguished. She could satisfy herself of enough to indicate the route they had taken—away over the hills that separate the vales of Ettrick and Yarrow, and by the path that has since got the name of the King's Road, leading directly to the Tower of Tushielaw. But a quick and threatening change in the weather soon attracted her attention. The booming of the wind seemed to cease, and, shortly after, the clouds, through the openings of which the moon had been seen labouring during the previous part of the night, appeared to run rapidly together, so as to conceal the face of the night queen, and to present a homogeneous mass of dark vapour over all the heavens. A flash of vivid lightning now flared in her eyes, and left her for a moment in suspense whether she had not been blinded by the bright fluid; then on came the peal of thunder, which, reverberating among the mountains like discharges of artillery, filled her

with that peculiar awe which the speaking clouds throw over the hearts of mortals. The rain came down in torrents, and had scarcely begun to pour, when the speat-rills of the high lands were heard dashing down like angry spirits to swell the Henderland Burn and the Megget, and raise the fury of these mountain streams. The sound of the thunder had awoke the children, who, leaving in terror their beds, came running to their mother, to seek that protection which could alone allay their fears. Circling round her knees, they hid their heads among the folds of her clothes, or clambered to her bosom, and twined their arms round her neck. It was in vain she asked them to return to bed; they conceived themselves safer on the breast of their mother, though she still sat at the casement, and the lightning glanced in their eyes, than they could be in their beds, muffled up in the bedclothes, and listening to the successive peals of thunder. As she sat in this attitude, with the children cowering into her bosom, like little chickens under the wing of their mother, she observed that the thunder approached nearer and nearer, as the period between the flash and the peal diminished gradually to a second; and a sudden flash among the trees, accompanied with a crackling noise, connected with some destructive operation of the bolt, indicated that mischief had been done in that quarter of the wood. It was where the elm stood, the subject of Merlin's rhyme; and this circumstance sent the current of her thoughts in that direction, where there was so much aliment for her excited fancy. She silently prayed that the tree might be destroyed; and its towering top, above all others of the wood, held out some hope that her strange wish might be realized.

The sound of a man's voice—that of Dick of the Muir, as he was styled—the individual who kept the gate of the Tower—was heard shouting to some one without, in reply

to some request made by the latter. It was now about two in the morning, and Marjory could not conceive what could be the purpose of the stranger's visit at that dreary hour.

"What want ye wi' my Leddie at this time, man?" said Dick. "My master's frae hame, and my commission doesna extend to opening the gate to strangers on night visits."

"But I'm nae stranger, Dick," replied the other. "I served the Cockburns before ye was born, and hae wandered many a weary step, in the midst o' this storm, to speak a word to the ear o' my Leddie. The time o' my visit is a good sign o' the importance o' my counsel. For God's sake, open, man! or ye may rue this hour to that o' your deein struggle, when Laird and Leddie may be in the moil there, ahint the auld chapel, and a' through the laziness o' their warder."

"Raff i' the mire!" cried the warder—saluting him after the custom of the times, when every man had a distinctive appellation, in the absence of sirnames. "I took ye, man, for ane o' Tushielaw's scouts."

The creaking of the hinges of the gate was now heard.

"What brings ye frae Peebles, man?" continued the warder, "in sic a night as this, when a witch wouldna venture on the Skelf Hill, far less owre North Berwick Law."

"It's no to tell ye that Merlin's elm has fa'en," rejoined Ralph; "but three oaks on three sides o't are lying on the earth, and that stately tree may be a gallows still. You say, Henderland's frae hame. I'm glad o' the news. It's his leddie I want to see: an' she maun be roused frae her couch to speak to her auld servitor. Time bides nae man; neither does King James."

Another peal of thunder drowned the conversation of the man; and Marjory, rousing her little refugees, urged

them to return to their beds, that she might be left to hear the intelligence of this midnight messenger, whose words already, so far as she had heard them, carried tokens of evil. His reference to the king struck a chord that prior solitude had made sensitive; and even the remark as to the tree that had escaped the bolt, had in it a peculiar power over her shattered nerves. Her fears operated upon the children, who, even to the youngest, put strange questions to her.

"Why are you here, mother, in the lightning?" cried Hector.—"And where is my father?" inquired Helen.—"See that flash again!" said Margaret, as she buried her head in her mother's bosom.

"Poor, helpless, little ones!" ejaculated she. "How little know ye that that which fears ye most, is to me the smallest of my terrors! If man's wrath were quenched, heaven's would be easily averted. This messenger's intelligence may seal your fates, and be felt in its consequences to the last term of your lives. Come, loves, to bed. Hear ye that foot in the stair?"

The allusion to a mysterious visitor accomplished what the lightning of heaven could not effect—such is the secret power of mystery over the young heart. Rising from her lap, they hurried away to their beds, and left the not less terrified mother to hear the intelligence of the night messenger. The door opened, and Ralph stood before her.

"God be thanked, my Leddie Cockburn," said he, in a repressed voice, and with fearful looks—"God be thanked, for Henderland's absence! The king, wi' his nobles, are at Peebles, on their way to Liddesdale, to tak vengeance on the chiefs o' the Borders, wha hae been foremost in the foray and the rieving raid. They whisper yonder that there's a hangman in the train, wi' ropes, to hang the ringleaders on their castle buttresses; and Henderland is to be their first victim. O my Leddie! dispatch, quick as thae

flashes o' levin, a messenger to the master, and tell him to flee to England, till the king's wrath has blawn owre. I hae braved this awful storm, auld as I am, to save my master; and, if I but saw him safe frae the king's ire, I could lay my banes at the foot o' the grave o' the Cockburns."

"I have been looking for this Ralph," answered Marjory, as she lifted her hands to seize her hair, in her distress. "Even now, God be merciful! my husband is in the very act of rieving and rebellion. But what said ye of Merlin's Elm, man? Is it not skaithed? Speak, no secrets now; are the trees beside it blasted, and does it stand?"

"I hae heard yer Leddieship laugh at that auld rhyme," replied the servitor. "Fear naething for a madman's freak. But it's true that three oaks by its side are blasted, riven and laid on the earth, and yet it stands."

"Strange, strange are the ways of heaven," cried she, wringing her hands. "Ralph, you must be the messenger to my husband. Haste and saddle my grey jennet, and flee by the Riever's Road, to Tushielaw. Tell Henderland and Adam Scott, that King James comes, with a halter, to avenge the rights of royalty and peace. Cry it forth in the midst of their battle. If he will not flee, take his horse's head, and lead him to England. Away, away, for mercy and Henderland's sake, good Ralph, and whisper in his ear—hark ye, man, 'tis no woman's dream—whisper the fate of Lailoken's tree. The thunder may drown his laugh."

The faithful servant obeyed the command of his former mistress; and, hastening as fast as his old limbs would enable him, mounted Marjory's grey jennet, and was soon out in the midst of the storm. The only remaining servant left in the tower, besides the warder, was, at the same time, despatched, by his half-frantic mistress, to proceed on the road to Peebles, and reconnoitre the king's company,

and convey to her what intelligence he could learn in regard to its movements. By this time it was now about three o'clock; but the morning was still dark, the storm had not abated, the rain still poured, the lightning flashed, and the neighbouring streams rolled over their rugged channels with a noise that equalled the thunder which yet shook the heavens. Marjory again took her seat on the casement; and her fancy, stimulated by her fears, became again busy in the conjuration of images which, however fearful, unhappily stood too great a chance of being realized. The substratum of indisputable facts was itself a good foundation of fear:—The king, angry, and breathing revenge against his rebellious subjects of the Border, was at hand—even within a few miles of her husband's residence; and the ensign of his authority and punishment was borne by the common executioner; then he would detect her husband in the very commission of that rebellious act against which the royal vengeance was to be directed; and, above all, she feared—nay, she was certain, from her knowledge of Henderland's free, bold spirit, that he would disdain to fly, and would at once commit himself into the hands of a young incensed monarch, who had travelled forty miles for his blood. These were fearful, incontrovertible facts, and they were contemplated by a solitary female in the dark hour of night, in the midst of one of the fiercest storms that had ever visited that part of the country, and under the blue lights of a fancy that, in spite of the appeals of judgment, reverted to an old prophecy of a wonderful being, which seemed to have been respected even by the lightning of heaven: the elm still stood; its brethren of the forest had fallen; and the rope to be attached to it was on its way to Henderland. Fearful forebodings took possession of her mind; and, as her fears rose higher and higher, she looked out in the dark, while the gleams of lightning played round her couch, and every

sound that differed from the roaring of the storm arrested her ear, and kept her on the rack of painful anxiety. Her little children, meanwhile, who had caught sympathetically her fears, and could not divine the cause of their mother's vigil by the window in a thunder storm, had renounced sleep; and, disregarding her efforts to restrain them, must see her at intervals, and question her again and again; and even from their sleeping apartment they sent their exclamations of fear, and aggravated, by their sorrows and terror, the misery of their mother.

In this condition Marjory remained for another hour. There was no stir in the tower, where a female domestic or two lay, or slipped about, under the weight of a fear, the cause of which had not been explained to them. The silence internally, broken at times by the cries of the restless children, formed a strange and awe-inspiring contrast to the turmoil without, where darkness and the storm still held sway over the earth. Oppressed by the sight of the black heavens, she yet trembled to look for the first glimpse of dawn, which might be soon expected to be seen struggling through the vapours of the storm. Light would bring the king and the executioner; and she prayed that she might have an opportunity of seeing her husband before the arrival of the royal cavalcade, that she might fall on her knees, and implore his instant flight into England; but her ears caught no sounds in the direction of Tushielaw, save the thunder and the rain, and, at intervals, the scream of the drenched owl or frightened hawk, or the wheep of the restless lapwing, driven from the morass by the overwhelming torrent. Then came the cry again, of "Mother, mother!" from her sleepless children, responded to by her own, "Hush, hush, my darlings! your father cometh!" when her pained ear sought again the direction of Peebles, and she trembled as her fancy suggested the sound of hoof or horn.

Thus another hour passed, and her racked feelings were still uncheered by a glimpse of hope. The strength of her soul seemed to have passed into the physical organs of the eye and ear; and every change, from darkness or silence, produced exacerbations of her fear, and painful apprehension. The faint shade of light in the eastern heavens, which gave tokens of the approaching dawn, might be a precursor of the king and his retinue; and as her eye fell upon it, she listened again for the coming tread. A very faint sound was now heard, and it was too evident that it came not from Tushielaw; it was from the direction of Peebles, and it sounded as if it were the tread of a horse. It must be, she instantly thought, the scout of the king's cavalcade; for, in her painful anxiety, she had forgotten her own messenger. The step approached nearer and nearer; and more intense, in the same degree, grew her apprehension, till the sound of her messenger's voice, calling the warder, struck her ear—and she imagined she never heard a voice so hollow and ominous of death. The man was admitted, and his heavy step up the spiral stair, flustering in the toil of a vain precipitude in the dark entrance, declared the impatience of his intelligence.

"Ah! my Leddie," said he, as he ran forward, breathlessly and fearfully, "Ralph spoke truth. The king's party will be at the castle in less time than an eagle may flee frae Dunyon to Ruberslaw. I hae seen them. They carry torches to shew them the hill-paths, and keep them oot o' the saft bogs. The light shone fearfully on the hill-sides, and the clatter o' their horses' hoofs rang in my ears. I had seen enough, and made the greatest speed to bring the ill news."

"Cockburn, Cockburn," ejaculated the disconsolate wife, "what power may now save ye from thy fate? His proud spirit will disdain flight—ay, and prompt a meeting with his executioner. What has become of Ralph? Every-

thing conspires toward the ruin of my hopes. You must to Tushielaw, Thomas, and give a second warning to your master. Tell him of this torch-light progress of the royal executioner, and warn him again to fly for his life, and the life of one who lives through him. Yet, stay—shall I not go myself? One messenger hath failed already—shall a wife fail in the cause of her husband's life?"

"The mountain torrents are swelled, my Leddie," replied Thomas of the Woodburn, "an' will be noo sweepin owre the Riever's Road, carryin baith man an' horse to the howes; an' nane but an auld hill-roadster may ken the richt tract frae that to ruin in the midst o' the darkness. Ye micht as weel try to pass the Brig o' Dread, my Leddie. Yer bonnie body wad be fund a corpse wi' the mornin's licht, an' Cockburn, pardoned by the king maybe, micht greet owre't. Besides, ye should be here. A woman's voice turns awa meikle wrath."

"Away, then, yourself, good Thomas!—I believe your counsel is good. Heaven speed the message! Cockburn's delay gives me a glimmer of hope, that Ralph hath already turned his head to England. If so be it, you will report to me privately, and away from the ear of the king's followers. If not, and if he cometh to meet the king, heaven look down in mercy on these poor children, who still cry for their mother, and will not rest!"

Thomas obeyed; and, as she turned to comfort her children, before she again betook herself to her weary station, she heard the clatter of the horse's heels over the gateway, The restlessness of her little ones pained her: she imagined she saw, in their instinctive anxiety and fear, some presage of coming evil, whereby, before another night, they might be orphans; and all her efforts to remove the impression only tended to confirm it—thus strangely and fantastically prophetic, is the apprehensive heart. After again assuring them that their father was coming, she sought her seat

at the casement; and saw, now, the grey dawn, throwing a stronger light over the bleak hills, and exhibiting the white, foaming cataracts, dashing from brae to brae! Any hope of seeing Cockburn, now, before the coming of the king, had gradually dwindled away, and was extinct; and she as much feared to hear a sound from the direction of Tushielaw, as she, an hour before, was anxious for that indication of her husband's approach. Every instant she might expect to hear the tramp of the king's horses; nothing could avert that sound from her ear, or prevent it beating upon her heart. It came at last; she heard it audibly, mixed with the discordant jingle of armour, and striking her ear at the same time that a horrid glare of torch-light pierced the deep wood, and arrested her eye. In a few minutes more, a trumpet sounded a shrill blast; the feet of many restless horses raised a confused noise, that was mixed with broken, under-toned ejaculations, and clanking of swords and bucklers, and, after a minute or two of comparative silence, came the high tones of a herald's voice, demanding admittance in the name of King James. The warder repaired to his mistress, and got his answer. The gate was opened, and Marjory saw the cavalcade enter the base court surrounding the castle; while two large bodies of soldiers, coming up about the same time, took their stations on each side of the entrance. A circle was now formed by those who were within the court; and the grim faces of the nobles, as they reflected the glare of the torches, were revealed clearly to her gaze. In the middle stood the young king, in close and secret counsel with his confidential advisers, and, at last, the warder was called before his Majesty, to account for the absence of his master, tell where he had gone, and record his proceedings. The man reluctantly obeyed the call.

"Where is thy master, sirrah?" inquired the king.

The warder was silent, and the question was repeated in sterner tones.

"I keep only this castle, your Highness," replied the warder; "my master is his ain keeper—an' a better there's no between the twa Tynes."

"Thou art a good keeper of thine own tongue, at least," said James, angrily; "but we come not from court unprepared with remedies for opening the mouths of close-hearted seneschals. Let Lithcraig attend."

An opening was now made in the circle of nobles, and a man, dressed in a long black doublet, came forward, holding in his hands a rope, ready to be suspended, and to suspend, in its turn, the disobedient warder.

"Throw thy cord over the buttress, there, cried one of the nobles; "give the noose mouth enough to tell its own tale, and I will answer for it bringing out his."

The man proceeded forward to a buttress of the castle, completely exposed to the eyes of Marjory, by the gleams that flared from the torches; and she saw him deliberately go through the operation of making the projection available for the purpose of a gallows, by binding the cord to it, and suspending a running noose, which seemed to gape in grim gesture for its victim. The moment the rope was suspended, James pointed to it, and asked the warder to proceed and answer his questions. The terrified man cast a wild eye on the relentless crowd around him, and then on the engine of death that dangled before him, and, with faltering tongue, told the king that Cockburn had gone on a midnight raid against Adam Scott of Tushielaw, who, some time before, had made an assault on Henderland, and carried off twenty head of cattle, besides wounding several of Cockburn's men; he stated, farther, that there had been many raids of late in Liddesdale; but that his master had had, until Tushielaw roused him, scarcely any share in these struggles, preferring the society of his lady,

the fairest and the kindest woman of the Borders, to the pleasures of rieving. This statement was received as evidence against Cockburn.

All these transactions had been narrowly watched by Marjory, who was now more and more satisfied that the doom of her husband was sealed, if he made his appearance before the king in the humour he now exhibited. She saw them bind the warder with ropes until their trial was over, that he might remain in pledge for the truth of his statements; and the heads again held counsel on the next step they should take in the unexpected event of the "traitor," as they called him, not being found at home, notwithstanding of their attempted surprise by a night visit. These doings had occupied as much time as allowed the glimmer of early dawn to pass into a grey light, that, while it did not render the torches unnecessary, exhibited in strange and grotesque shades the group of dark figures, their changing faces, moving heads, and inauspicious gestures, on which the gleams of the torches flickered faintly, in struggles with the rising morn. Above them, the dangling noose claimed her averted eye, and sent through her nerves shivers that seemed to make the blood run back in the veins, and stagnate about the heart. In any other position but that in which she was placed, she would have made the castle ring with involuntary screams; and it was only the intense anxiety with which she watched every sound in the distance, in the struggling hope that Cockburn would not make his appearance, that bound her down in the silent, breathless mood which she now exhibited. Neither could she have borne the extraordinary spectacle below her casement, had it not been that her wish to watch every indication in the direction of Tushielaw, overcame the feelings inspired by the moving tumult of fierce men that waited there for the blood of her husband. Sometimes the thought found its way through her anxiety

—why did they not call for or visit her? But the solution was not difficult; for she knew that men bent on purposes of cruelty, do not court the mediation of women. And then again she meditated, for a moment, a descent to them, and an attempt, by throwing herself at the feet of the king, to secure, by anticipation, mercy to her husband, when he might, if ever he should, be found. This last thought was passing through her mind, and she had intuitively drawn her clothes around her bosom, as a preparation for her rising resolution, when her husband's horn, in all its well-known windings, struck her ear. That sound had hitherto inspired the pulses of a living heart, and sent through her veins the delightful tumult of a gratified hope; it had been the prelude to the close embrace of affection; the flourish of joy on the meeting again of separated hearts. It was now the death-knell of both. She would have sunk to the ground as the sound fell on her ear, but that the recess of the casement sustained her powerless frame. After a few moments of insensibility, she again opened her eyes; and the first vision that presented itself to her, was her husband marching into the castle between two rows of the king's troops. He came nobly forward, with a free, erect carriage, and a look undaunted by the scowls that fell on him from every side. On coming up to the king, who stood in a haughty, indignant attitude, he was prepared to throw himself at his feet, when his eye caught the rope, with the noose at the end of it, hanging from the buttress. He started, and threw a hurried look up to the casement, where Marjory sat watching his every movement; but his fortitude returned again, and making a step forward, he threw himself at the feet of the king.

"Here doth an humble subject," he said, "deposit the loyalty he oweth to his lawful king."

"On the eve, or in the midst of rebellion," cried James,

in ironical anger. "Seize the rebel! One caught in the act, maketh a good beginning. Four reigns of Jameses have been merely borne or suffered, by beggarly tolerance, by these Border sovereigns, and the best part of a kingdom made an arena for the strife of the contention of petty kings, who rob, and steal, and kill on all hands, heedless whether the victim be king or knave. This shall be ended —by the faith of Scotland's king it shall! 'Habit and repute,' is good evidence by our old law against common thieves; and I ask my nobles, too good a jury for such caitiffs, what a common thief deserves?"

"To be strung up to the buttress," replied several voices, in deep hollow sounds, that rung fearfully round the recesses of the ballium, and reached the ear of Marjory.

"Parys Cockburn of Henderland," cried James, "hath, by a jury of our nobles, been deemed worthy to die the death of a thief, and a rebel against our authority. Let him be forthwith hanged till he be dead, on the buttress of his own tower, as an example to evil doers in time to come."

A quick movement of simultaneous, and, in many cases, intuitive agitation, followed this order. Two men seized the unfortunate gentleman, and proceeded to bind his hands behind his back, while the executioner proceeded to let go the end of the rope, so as to bring within his reach the noose, which had previously been purposely elevated, so as to be more exposed to the eyes of the beholders. Every step of these proceedings was observed by Marjory from her seat at the window; and it was not till she saw the men lay hold of her husband, and the executioner proceed to adjust the rope, that she ceased to be able to watch the details of this extraordinary mock trial and real condemnation. At that moment she uttered a loud scream, and fell on the floor in a state of insensibility,

from which she was roused by her little daughter, Helen, who had come from her bed to ascertain her mother's illness. Rising in a state of frenzy, she sought the door of the apartment, with a view to throw herself between the king and her husband; but the door was locked in the outside—a precaution, doubtless, taken by the king's orders, to prevent a scene of a woman's unavailing grief. The prospect, now, of being forced to remain in a chamber a few feet above the gallows on which her husband, and the object of her strongest and softest affections, was to be suspended, and hanged like a common malefactor, rose on her bewildered view. Though she might place her hands over her eyes, the *sound* of his death would reach her ear —the jerk of the fatal cord, the struggle of the choking breath, the last sigh of her beloved Parys, would come to her, and reason might remain to bear it. If she could close up both eyes and ears, her fancy would exaggerate the acts performing around her, and fill her mind with shapes and forms, if possible more hideous than the dread spectres of the waking sense. Breaking loose from Helen, and also from Hector—who had joined his sister, and had from the window got some glimpse of the dire operations in progress in the court, and thus ascertained the cause of his mother's scream—she ran round the apartment, in the way of unfortunate maniacs, till her brain became dizzy with the quick circumgyrations, and then stood ready to fall, staring wildly at her children, who had followed her in her progress with loud screams. Meanwhile, the buzz of the preparations for the execution fell on her ear, and, running to the window, she held forth her extended arms, and implored the king, in wildly pathetic words and moans, to spare her husband. The king never moved his head; but many of the men turned up their grim, embrowned faces, fixed their eyes on her beautiful countenance, and saw her white arms wildly sawing the air,

without showing any indications of being moved. Cockburn himself, who stood with his arms bound behind his back, his armour off, and the neck of his doublet rolled down on his shoulders, could not trust his eye in the direction of his wife and children, but stood with a look fixed on the grey walls of his tower. The voice of the king was now heard, crying, "Is everything prepared?" and, "Yes, my liege," rolled forth from the mouth of the rough-toned executioner. The unfortunate Marjory, in this extremity, turned from the window, and rushed into a neighbouring room, from which a few steps of descent led to a window not so far removed from a broken part of the wall as to prevent her getting to the ground. In this, by a mighty effort, she succeeded, hearing, as she hastened away, the shrill cries of her children following her, and imploring her to return. Her brain was fired beyond the capability of sane thought. The soldiers, who saw her fall on the ground, lifted her up, and then pushed her rudely away from the ground they were ordered to guard, confronting her otherwise impossible efforts to get forward by their swords, and threatening to do her bodily injury if she dared to resist their authority.

At this moment she heard a voice commanding some one to seize and confine the wife of the culprit; and, getting more confused by the occurrence of new and more harrowing incidents—the cries of her children sounding from the window—the noise of those forwarding the execution, if not at that very time, binding her husband to the gallows, filling all the air with a confused buzz—and the coming of the men to seize and secure her—she sprang forward out of a postern, and, with the rapid step of flying despair, endeavoured to get beyond the dreadful sounds which haunted her ear. In her flight—the consequence of the spur of frenzy, as much as of a wish to lessen pain which was insufferable—she came to the Henderland Linn,

a mountain stream, that falls rolling down the heights with a loud noise. It was much swelled, and the waters were gushing and roaring over a ledge of rock that crosses its course, and forms in that quarter a cascade—beautiful in certain states of the river, but frightful when the spirit of the storms has sent down the red stream to dash over the height. The noise was welcome to her; and, exhausted, she threw herself down on a seat by the side of the linn;* yet, so quick is the ear to catch, through other sounds, that of the cause of a pregnant grief, that she heard the increased noise of the crowd at the Castle, consequent on the execution of the sentence of condemnation of her husband—a swelling shout, as of a completed triumph, came on the wind; and, unable to bear this consummation of all her woes, she ran forward, and threw herself down with her head in the line of the cascade, that the roar of the waters might drown the dreadful sound.

How long she lay in that extraordinary predicament, she was never able to tell; but the sound of the roaring waters rang in her ear for many an after day. When she ventured to raise her head, everything seemed quiet at Henderland Tower; and the silence now appeared to her more dreadful than the former excitement. The storm, which had been gradually ceasing, was lulled, and the morn had now attained to a grey daylight. She knew not what step to pursue. She would remain, and she would not remain; she would return to the Tower, and she trembled at the thought. Starting up, she began to retrace her steps slowly back through the wood, stopping at every interval of a few moments, to listen if she could hear any sound. Looking around, she saw, disappearing from an old road that led away to Tushielaw, the last of the king's troops; and she omened sadly that they had completed their work. She hesitated again, whether she should proceed to a place

* Few travellers on the Borders have passed unnoticed the "lady's seat."—Ed.

where she would inevitably behold a sight that might unsettle her reason. But whether could she fly? What could she do? Her little children were there; it was still her home, and the dead body of her beloved husband was also there. But judgment might vacillate according to its laws; her feet had an impulse forward, which philosophy might not explain. She was hastening towards the Castle, and she scarcely knew that she was occupied in that act, in the absence of distinct volition. Looking up, she saw an old domestic running towards her; who, on coming up, wished her to relinquish her determination to go towards the Castle, and requested her to sojourn for a time in the woods, or wait till she sent for a jennet, to carry her to some house. She would give no explanation of her reasons for this advice; but looked terrified and confused when Marjory put to her some broken words of interrogation. Marjory could abide no parley, and, gently pushing the old attendant aside, hurried forward to the Castle, and entered the postern. The ballium was empty; the retainers of her husband had been marched off before the forces of the king; and any domestics that were left had fled to the woods in terror. She lifted her eye to the buttress, and saw suspended there the dead body of her husband. At the window of her apartment were her children, looking on the dreadful spectacle. The two elder had cried till their throats were dried and paralysed; and the youngest, who understood nothing of these proceedings, laughed when it saw its mother, and clapped its little hands for joy.

A knife, that lay alongside the place of execution, was seized by the unhappy wife; and, through a loophole that was opposite to the rope, she stretched her hand, and severed the fatal cord. The body fell with a crash upon the ground. Life was extinct; but who would convince the frantic wife that her beloved Parys was gone for ever?

She hung upon the dead body till, as the day advanced, the terrified domestics came in, and took her away from the harrowing spectacle. Force had to be applied to effect the humane purpose; and, for many a night, the screams that came from the west wing of Henderland spoke eloquently the misery of this child of misfortune. Cockburn was buried in the chapel ground near the Tower. Some time afterwards, when her grief could bear the recital, she wished to know what took place between her husband and the two messengers on that dreadful night—and she was gratified by the intelligence. Scott of Tushielaw had got intelligence of Cockburn's intentions, and was upon the watch to defend his property. A severe conflict ensued, in which several men on both sides were severely wounded. In the very midst of the fray, Ralph rode up to Cockburn, and delivered his message; but the proud chief replied, that he would face King James if he were the Prince of Evil himself; but that he could not pay his respects to his king till he first humbled the proud Tushielaw. A like effort was made by Thomas, and with a similar result. In fact, it appeared that Cockburn entertained no fear of danger from the visit of the king, and treated the story of the gallows' rope as a mere vision of some terrified mind; at least, if he had any doubts on that subject—and reports of the fiery temper of the king might have roused his suspicions—he conceived that a bold bearing would do him more good than a pusillanimous demeanour; and, as for flight, he despised it, as well as disapproved of it, on grounds of fancied prudence, seeing that he would thereby admit his guilt, and prove his pusillanimity, while it might ultimately turn out that the king's intentions were not hostile, whereby he would be exposed to the ridicule and scorn of both king and subjects. Having beat off Scott's retainers, and secured in this way, as he thought, a fancied victory, he marched direct on to his own Tower; and,

as he approached, sounded his horn in his usual way, to tell his wife that he entertained no fear, and to impress upon the mind of the king the boldness of the innocence of a man who had only been performing an act of self defence, in teaching an old enemy that he would not commit an assault upon him again with impunity.

In the course of time, Marjory Cockburn recovered slightly from the effects of these terrible visitations, and often she expressed her surprise that Lailoken's prophecy about the elm tree had not been proved by the events of that night; but some people thought that King James, who knew the prophecy well, wished to reduce the credit of soothsaying, and therefore hanged Cockburn on the buttress of the Tower, instead of the tree. Her little children played, as usual, round her; and, if a relenting fate had had in reserve any means for alleviating her grief, surely they might have been found in the prattle of innocence, and the hopes of a mother; but it was not ordained that she should be thus relieved. Every day saw a change on her; she gradually declined, till she took on the appearance of a skeleton. About three years after the death of Cockburn, Marjory died, doubtless, of that disease which (though discredited by many altogether) kills more mortals than typhus itself—a broken heart. The property had previously been escheated to the king, and the name of the Cockburns of Henderland never flourished again. She was buried in the grave of her beloved Parys; and some relation, who knew the loves and misfortunes of the pair, caused the foresaid stone to be erected, with the inscription we have copied, and shall copy again—"Here lie Parys of Cockburn. and his wife Marjory."

THE EXPERIMENTER.

No one who has escaped an imminent danger can resist the impulse that compels him to look back upon it, although the recollection harrows up his soul. It is now nearly thirty years since the events of which I write occurred; still they are as indelibly impressed upon my memory as the felon's brand upon his brow. It has rarely been the fortune of those miserable beings to whose number I had a narrow escape from adding one, to retain so lively a recollection of a long train of mental anguish. Even at this lengthened period from the occurrence of the events referred to, in my solitary walks, or when sleep forsakes my pillow, they will embody themselves, and pass in vivid succession over my mind; tears unbidden fill my eyes, and my heart melts in gratitude for my deliverance from so sad a fate—carried out under the cloud of night, buried like a dog, within sea-mark, or in the boundary of two proprietors' lands—entailing disgrace upon my family, and a horror of my memory, even scaring the simple husbandman from the neighbourhood of the spot where my ashes lay.

I was the only child of an aged father, the last of a family who had, in former days, been of no small consequence in that part of the country where he resided; but before his day, the numerous acres of land his forefathers had possessed owned other lords. All he inherited was the respect of the old people, and the tradition of former grandeur. His elder brother, of a more enterprising turn of mind, at their father's death had sold off the wrecks of a long train of mismanaged property, divided the proceeds between

himself and my father, and, after an affectionate adieu, set off for the West Indies. My father, less enterprising, remained where all his affections were fixed, and farmed a few acres from one of the new proprietors—void of ambition, content to glide down the stream of life unknowing and unknown by the busy world, all his cares concentrated on me, whom he intended for the church, and educated accordingly. For several years, and until misfortunes pressed so heavily upon him, he maintained me at college. When his means failed, I returned to my disconsolate parents, to consult how I should now proceed—whether to go out to Jamaica to my uncle, or commence teacher. My father had applied to his brother for aid in his difficulties, and been refused. The fears of my mother, and the wounded pride of my father determined my fate—I commenced teacher, and succeeded equal to my ambition.

My income was small; but my habits were simple and temperate, and my means supplied my wants abundantly. From the first dawnings of reason, my mind was of a studious, inquisitive turn; I thirsted after knowledge of every kind; and, while ardent in all my pursuits, I was of a joyous and hoping disposition. All was sunshine to me; even the blighting of my prospects at college affected not a mind which felt a consciousness of being able to soar to any height; a thousand projects floated through it, each of which, for a season, seemed sufficient to rear me to the pinnacle of fortune and fame. Thus had I dreamed on for three years. One of my many objects of study engrossed the greater portion of my thoughts—the mysterious tie that united soul and body. Could I untie this Gordian knot—and I was vain enough to hope I might—then would I rank amongst earth's brightest ornaments, and fill a niche with Newton and Bacon. This extraordinary subject had even when at school, engaged the greater part of my thoughts. Often have I left my fellows at play, and stolen

to some distant part of the churchyard, to muse and commune with myself, not without a boyish hope that some kind tenant of the tomb would reveal to me his mighty secret. Void of fear, I have implored the presence of spirits under the cloud of night. The feeling that filled my mind was an enthusiasm, which, though years and changes have rolled over my head, is still remembered with a sensation of pleasure.

I had kept my school for three years, to the satisfaction of the parents of my pupils and my own. My cup of enjoyment was full to overflowing. I had proceeded so far with several works of science; every one of which, ere I began, was to establish my fame, but each was quickly abandoned for some new idea. I had resumed again the first object of my inquiry, and was busily arranging materials for effecting the glorious discovery, when I was seized by an epidemic fever that was committing fearful ravages in the parish. All after this, for several weeks, is a blank in my memory, a hiatus in my consciousness. Contrary to the expectations of all that attended, I became convalescent. My strength slowly returned; but my mind had undergone a complete change: its buoyancy had fled, and no longer, like a butterfly, fluttering from one flower of fancy to another, it was fixed on the one engrossing object; yet I was conscious that the faculties of which I had once felt so proud, were now weak as those of an infant; and, dreamy and listless, I began to wander into the fields. My school had broken up. The greater part of my pupils were with a successful competitor who now supplied my place. This deepened my gloom; and I often returned with a feeling that my task on earth was accomplished—that all that remained for me was to die—that I was a cumberer of the earth. I never complained, but bore all in silence. I cared not for myself; but when I looked to my parents, I resolved to struggle on; and did

struggle manfully. I felt as a drowning man, who sees an object almost within his reach, that, were he enabled to grasp it, would secure his safety. He struggles and plunges towards it in vain, every succeeding effort only serving to diminish his hopes of escape, while, by allowing himself to sink in the stream, he would cease to suffer in a moment. To the eye of a casual observer, I had regained my wonted health, neither was there any strong indication of the change that had come over my feelings; yet to speak or act was painful to me, and I could not endure to be looked at with more than a passing glance—shrinking like a criminal, and fearing lest the thoughts that were passing in my mind might be discovered.

A strange sensation had, for some time, taken possession of me. I felt as if in a false position, by some means or other, to me inscrutable—that I had, at some former period of existence, either on this earth or some other planet, lived, acted, and witnessed, as I was now doing. Nothing appeared new to me: every incident of unwonted occurrence produced a dreamy effect of memory, as if I had experienced it before. This frame of mind was more annoying than painful, for I even at times felt a faint pleasure in it, and strove to anticipate events that were lodged in the womb of futurity: but my efforts were vain; I could not penetrate the mist; I could only recognise the objects as it cleared away.

At this time I was so fortunate as to procure the situation of amanuensis to a literary gentleman, who was employed upon a work of great extent, but of little interest. My labour was entirely mechanical. The confinement and the sedentary nature of my employment wrought still greater change on me; for hours I have sat, like an automaton, copying passages I felt no interest in, held only to my task by the consciousness of being no longer burthensome to my parents. An entire new train of ideas began to pass

through my mind in rapid succession; some of them so fearful and horrid that I trembled for myself. I felt as if impelled to crime by some power almost irresistible, and a strange pleasure in meditating upon deeds of blood took possession of me. My favourite subject, the mysterious connection between soul and body, was again strong upon me, and I longed to witness the last agonies of a person dying by violence. It was necessary to elucidate my theory, and the desire to obtain the knowledge, increased. The crime and all its horrors never occurred to me as any thing but a great, a magnanimous action, a sacrifice of my own feelings for the benefit of mankind.

One evening my employer detained me much later than he was wont. We sat as usual—he at one side of the table, I at the other. I had, all the afternoon, been much stronger than I had for some time before, and felt more confidence in myself than I had done for several weeks. No sensation gave indication of the misery that was to fill my heart. All at once my mind was hurled, as if by a whirlwind, from its calm. My employer stooped over a book, in which he was deeply engaged—his head was towards me. I was mending my pen with a stout, ivory-handled desk-knife. The temptation came upon me, with hideous force, to plunge the knife into his head, and obtain the great object I so long had desired. In this fearful moment I even reasoned—if I dare use the often-abused term—that the wound would be small, and hidden by the hair, so that no man could ever know, far less blame me for the act. I grasped the knife firmly in my hand, changing it to the best position to strike with effect. My mind felt pleased and happy. I actually exulted in the opportunity. My arm was raised to strike the unconscious victim of my madness, when he raised his head, and looked me in the face. I sank into my seat, with a faint scream, and wept like a babe. The impulse had passed away, like a hideous

nightmare. I shook in every limb, and raised my eyes to heaven, imploring pardon, and sighed forth a mental prayer of thanks; while the intended victim of my madness, unconscious of the danger he had escaped, did his utmost to soothe the agitation and distress which I could not conceal. I could no longer look upon his benign and placid countenance without a shudder of horror, such as the wretch must feel who is dragged to the spot where the body of his murdered victim lies witnessing against him. I felt that he was a victim snatched from me by a merciful God—a victim I had murdered in my heart. That same night I gave up my situation, much against the desire of my kind employer, and returned to my parents' roof, the most to be pitied of living men.

For several days I never left my bed, and scarcely took any food. My mind felt, at times, quite confused; at other times, strange ideas shot transitorily through it, with the vividness of lightning; but they were only coruscations, and left no impressions. I forgot them as quickly as they arose, and sank again into gloom. My malady began gradually to assume a new turn. Phantoms began to visit me; the sages of antiquity were my guests. I hailed them, at first, with pleasure, and enjoyed their presence, but soon grew weary of the voiceless, fleeting communion. In vain I spoke to them, or put questions in the most impassioned tones. No sound ever met my ear save my own. Yet there was a strange community of sentiment—an intercourse of soul between us; for they would shoot their ideas in through my eyes—smile, or look grave—and nod, assent, or shake the head, as various thoughts passed through my mind. After the first visits, I ceased to use articulated language; it was a joyless communion, a languid inanity, and I felt as if my own soul was no longer a dweller in its earthly tabernacle, but held a mysterious middle state between life and death. In vain I endeavoured to exert

my energies. I left my bed, and began to move about; still this new torment clung to me. I possessed a strange power. I had only to think of any event in history, and the whole was present before me, even the scenes around becoming changed to the places where the circumstances happened. I wished my memory annihilated; I strove not to think. My very endeavours called up more vividly new and strange ideas; wherever I was, the place seemed peopled by phantoms. Wherever I turned my eyes, a moving pageant of gorgeous or hideous figures, strangely real, were before me.

Oh, how I loathed my situation! Yet I complained to no one—not even to my parents; enduring all in secret, and hearing the bitter taunts of friends and acquaintances, who passed their heart-cutting remarks upon my indolence, and strange way of passing my time. To the eye of a casual observer, I was in good health, and shrunk from making known my painful and unheard-of state, lest I should be considered insane, and treated as such, by being placed in confinement—an idea that made me shudder. I often doubted my own sanity; yet I felt not like ordinary madmen. I had a consciousness that I was under some strong delusion, and what I saw could not be real; still, my visions were not the less annoying and painful. The only intervals of rest I enjoyed, was when the desire to witness the last expiring throb of a person dying by violence haunted me, which it did at times, if possible, with more overwhelming force than ever. This was the more unaccountable to me, for I am naturally of a humane and benevolent disposition; and, when not overpowered by a gust of passion, timid and averse to acts of strife and violence of any kind—shuddering and becoming faint at the sight of blood. My mental sufferings, from these conflicts between my natural turn of mind and its morbid state, became so great, that life grew a burden more than I

could long endure. Still, I shrunk from self-destruction; or, more properly speaking, the thought never occurred to me; for, had it come with half the force of the others by which I was enslaved, I would have, in a moment, obeyed the impulse. I had no idea of any crime, or a wish to witness the sufferings of the individual. I felt as a patriot might feel who sacrifices all for the good of his country—immolating my own feelings at the altar of science, and deeming the realization of my dreams of vital importance to mankind, who had hitherto been unable to discover the mysterious link that bound soul and body together.

At length, the thought came into my distracted mind that I might be able to try the great experiment upon myself; and a sensation near akin to joy came over me, as I turned over the various ways in which this might be accomplished. My whole invention was at work, contriving the safest mode in which I could approach nearest, without crossing "that bourne from whence there is no return;" and I felt, for days, all the pleasures and disappointments of a projector, adapting or rejecting the various schemes by turns. Bred at a short distance from the beach, I swam well. To fasten a weight to my body, sufficient to sink me, with a knife in my hand, to cut the cord as the last pang came upon me, and then rise to the surface, often presented itself, and was as often rejected. I might be so weak, as not to rise, or, in my confusion, I might stab myself in my effort to cut the cord, and the secret would be lost. At length, I fixed upon the following mode. Unknown to my parents or any one, I prepared the little room I had occupied from childhood, and, with a feeling of pride, called my study, by carefully securing from it all access of air, as far as was in my power; then, attaching a cord to the door and window, so contrived that the slightest pull would throw them wide open, I placed a chair in the centre of the room, and a chaffer of burning

charcoal by its side. With a feeling of exultation, I sat down to complete my experiment. The cords were fixed to my arms, so that, when I fell from my seat unconcious, the door and window would open, and restore animation by the access of vital air. I would thus attain my object, without exposing myself, or becoming the subject of public remark, which at all times was most hateful to me. I watched every mutation of feeling. For the first few minutes, I felt no change, except that the room became warmer and more agreeable. Gradually my breathing became more quick; but not in the least laboured. A gentle perspiration came upon me, accompanied by a luxurious languor, such as if I had ate a plentiful dinner, and stretched myself upon a sunny bank; an irresistible desire to sleep was stealing over me. My feelings were highly pleasing; but a stupor gradually came over me, and banished thought. My next sensation was a thrill of agony, which no words can express. It was more intense than if thousands of pointed instruments had been thrust into every muscle of my body—plucked out, and again thrust in, with the rapidity of lightning. Thrilling coruscations of vivid light flashed across my eyes. I attempted to shriek —only a faint groan escaped; my organs of voice refused to obey their office. Human nature could not continue to suffer as I suffered. Again I sank into unconsciousness, and again my agony came on me, though not so intense as before. Faint glimmerings of thought began to visit me. The first was that the agonies of death were upon me; that I was in danger of sitting too long; and, with a convulsive effort I attempted to throw myself from the chair, but felt I was restrained. Opening my eyes, I found them dim and visionless; a dull and benumbing sensation made me feel as if my brain was bursting my head; whether it was day or night I could not distinguish; my ears were filled with confused sounds, mixed with a hissing and

booming that distracted me; I felt faint and sick, so as I never felt before or since. That I was dying, I firmly believed; and again I attempted to sink from off the chair. As consciousness returned, I found myself stretched upon my bed. Still, all was darkness and confusion, I fell into a lethargy or sleep, which lasted for hours

When I awoke, my mother sat weeping by the side of my bed; her suppressed sob was the first sound that fell upon my ear. Never can I forget that moment!—her melting woe, as she sat stooping towards me; the anguish expressed in my father's countenance, as he stood supporting himself upon the back of her chair, his eyes bent on my face. I turned myself upon my pillow, and gave vent to a flood of tears.

Before a word had been exchanged, the surgeon, to whose exertions I was indebted for my restoration to life, entered. To his inquiries after me, my mother answered, that, for the last few hours, I had been in a quiet sleep, and had just moved and turned as if I had awakened; but that, agreeable to his desire, she had not spoken to me. Without answering her, he stooped over the bed to feel my pulse. I turned to him, and inquired what had happened. A mutual explanation took place. That I had attempted suicide, both he and my parents believed, until, to vindicate myself, I gave them a minute account of the object I had in view in what I had done. He listened with intense interest, not unmixed with astonishment, as he gradually drew from me an account of my long train of mental anguish. I could at once perceive that he did not ridicule me, but rather sympathised with me, and blamed me much for not making my case known long before, as it was not, he hoped, beyond the reach of medicine. He told me of several cases in which he had been successful, nearly similar to my own, although not to the extent of duration and variety of change. The

following, which had nearly been as fatal, and would have been as inexplicable, made the greatest impression on me.

The subject of his narrative was the wife of a near neighbour of ours, who had been dead for some years. At the time both were well stricken in age, and remarkable both for their piety and walk in life. Their family, the greater part of whom were alive, had all reached manhood, and were engaged in active duties in different parts of the country. The old couple themselves were living on the fruits of their early industry and economy, in a small solitary cottage, calmly closing the evening of a well-spent life. The first attack of the malady was sudden and severe. its approach being unperceived by any one, even by the sufferer. Both had spent the day at church, and returned, conversing with their neighbours, until they reached their own cottage, where they sat reading their Bible, or conversing on subjects derived from it, until the herd-boy brought home the cow from the common pasture. On looking up, the woman saw the cow standing and lowing at the byre door. She rose from her seat, and went to admit and attend to the welcome guest. She did not return to the house after an unusually protracted stay; and her husband, beginning to be uneasy, and fearful lest the cow might have kicked or hurt her, went to ascertain the cause of her tarrying. Struck with horror, he found her talking in a fearful strain to an imaginary second person, the cow still uncared for, and the milking-pail upside down, she standing upon the bottom, busy adjusting a halter to one of the beams, and imploring the ideal person not to go until she could get all ready to accompany him to that happy land of which he spoke, and to which he showed her the way. Her distressed husband, rushing forward, clasped her in his arms as she was putting the noose over her head. She screamed and resisted with all

her energies, calling upon the phantom to rescue her from her cruel husband. For several weeks she remained in this state, confined and strictly watched. The surgeon succeeded in subduing the disease; and when reason returned, she had no consciousness of anything that had happened during the interval; but, with a grateful heart, returned thanks to God for preservation and recovery.

My pride was wounded to observe that the surgeon thought I was insane, for he quoted the above case as a parallel to mine. This I remonstrated against; and, although I could perceive a credulous smile upon his features, I at once cheerfully agreed to put myself under his care. When he retired for the evening, I found that I was indebted for my escape from death to a strange circumstance—the death of my uncle, my father's brother, who had returned from the West Indies some years before with considerable wealth and a broken constitution. We had never seen him since his return. Prosperity had brought to him no pleasure, riches no enjoyment. From being one of the most joyous and liberal of lads before he left home, he had returned to his country sullen and avaricious; with all his wealth, a poorer man, in mind, than when he left it—suffering from a continued dread of poverty, and the victim of hypochondria.

"Poor John!" my father would say, "how I pity you! Your money is not your own; you are only the gatherer for some other person. You dare not enjoy a shilling; neither can you take it with you when you die." My father had just received an intimation from a lawyer, requesting his immediate attendance in Edinburgh, where his brother had died suddenly the evening before, to make arrangements for his funeral, and look after his effects, as he believed he had died intestate. My mother had hastened up stairs with the intelligence, and to request me to come down, when she found me seated upon the chair, with my head sunk upon

my breast, as if I had been in a profound sleep. Overcome by the vapour, she sank upon the floor; the noise of her fall brought up my father, whose first task was to rush to me, give me a gentle shake, and then look in agony at me and at his wife. When he took his hand from me, I fell to the floor by the side of my mother, and the window opened as I had contrived. Uttering a cry of anguish, he seized the wife of his bosom in his arms, hurried out of the fatal room, sent the servant girl for the surgeon, and returned for me, who was lying as if dead, my eyes open and fixed, dull and void of expression. My mother soon recovered; a few neighbours came to her aid; and the surgeon was, fortunately, soon found. Their utmost efforts were for long, to all appearance, of little avail. The surgeon had almost despaired of success; at length his patience and skill were rewarded by my returning animation. The rest is already known.

So violent was the shock my constitution had sustained, from the action of the noxious gas, that it was several weeks before I was enabled to leave my room. The skill of my surgeon was evidently operating a beneficial change upon my mind. The languor and heaviness, mixed with restless anxiety, which had so long oppressed me, began to yield to the powers of his prescriptions; my hallucinations became less annoying and more distant in their attacks, until they entirely ceased, and I was restored to the full enjoyment of existence. Change of scene was his final medicine; and this I most cheerfully agreed to take, for my circumstances were now affluent, and enabled me to live or wander where I might choose. My restless mind would at times dwell with peculiar pleasure upon some one favoured project or other; and, fearful lest I should fall again into some new philosophical dream, I resolved to travel. With a stout horse and a heavy purse, I bade adieu to my parents for a short time, and rode out of my native

valley, accompanied by Malcolm Dow, a stout lad who had been reared in the family, as my servant.

I would have gone to the Continent, and visited the banks of the Rhine, Switzerland, and Italy; but I bethought me of the delightful and romantic scenery of our own dear land, with its infinitely varied beauties; the endless pleasure I would have in viewing them, in all their bearings, from the dark frowning passes in the Highlands, where rock rises piled upon rock, and the impetuous cataract makes the stoutest eye reel in looking on it, to the wimpling stream that glides through some bosky dell, where wild flowers spangle the banks, driving some village mill, whose distant clack, mingling with the murmur of the stream and the song of birds from the woods, forms a concert so sweet to the lover of nature. Without an object further than amusement, Malcolm and I jogged on for the Falls of the Clyde. Early in the afternoon, we arrived in Lanark, where I resolved to stop for a few days; and leaving Malcolm at the inn, looking after the horses, I walked out by the West Port, to visit the Falls of Stonebyres. I descended the steep brae to the old bridge, where I sat for some time, enjoying the sweep of the river, which was considerably swollen at the time, and the falls were in great magnificence. I could hear the roar of the waters as they dashed over from fall to fall, and perceive the grey mist that rose from the abyss. As I sat absorbed in the scene, a venerable personage, evidently of the class of farmers in the neighbourhood, came to me, and, after the salutation of strangers, he seated himself upon the parapet by my side, and joined in conversation and anecdote of the scenes around. He agreed with me that Clyde was a lovely stream; but added, it was a bloody one. I felt shocked at such an epithet being applied to the object of my present admiration, and requested his reason for it.

"O sir," he said, "my reason is too good for giving it

that name; it has been the grave of thousands, and will yet swallow more in its greedy bosom. My only son, the hope of my declining years, perished in its waves; and even here where we sit, before this bridge was built, a scene of heroic fortitude and resignation was exhibited to sorrowing numbers, who could render no aid—a scene indeed not surpassed in ancient or modern history.

Struck by his manner, I requested him to give me the account as he had heard it.

"You shall hear it," said he, "as I had it when a boy, from my grandfather, who was one of the sorrowing witnesses of the event. There lived, in a cottage on the banks, some distance up the stream from where we are at present, a pious and industrious man, who had a very small farm attached to the ferry, which he rented; the boat that plied across the river for the accommodation of passengers was his principal support. He was very poor, and had a numerous family—very young—to provide for by his exertions. The river was much swollen by heavy rains which had fallen for some days. It was the day of the fair at Lanark, and he rejoiced in the gains he should acquire. He was resolute and athletic, and, from long practice, knew the ferry well. The labours of the day had passed off with cheerfulness; the river had continued to rise rapidly, the evening was coming on, and the last boat-load, among whom was my grandfather, were embarked. He pushed out into the stream, and, skilfully as he manœuvred his boat, the river carried them down considerably below the usual landing place. The steady boatman, of all that were in danger, was alone collected, and free from alarm. His wife, who stood on the side with an infant in her arms, mingled cries and prayers with the roaring of the swollen river. At length he neared the side at an eddy, and the passengers waded to the green banks. His wife and all called to him to step out also, and haul the boat out of the

stream; but they implored him in vain, for he relied too much upon his own skill and strength, and heeded them not. Two or three passengers stood on the opposite bank, wishing to cross also; and the temptation of a few more pence induced him to push again into the angry stream, after a kind assurance to his wife, and those with her, that there was no danger. Scarce had he spoke, when it was evident that he and the boat were as much the sport of the swollen Clyde, as a withered leaf. The skiff shot along like an arrow towards the fall. A wild scream arose from both sides of the river; all aid was out of human power, yet no cry for help escaped him; he sat down with calm resignation, pulled his bonnet over his eyes, and, muffling his face in his plaid, cried—'Jesus have mercy!' and, ere the sounds died away, he was swept over the tremendous fall, and perished."

The scene seemed to pass before me, as I listened to him, and gazed upon the stream. We parted, and I proceeded to view the fearfully majestic spot, where the river on my right, increasing its angry roarings, gushed over the awful rock. Descending the footpath on my right, the whole scene of terror and grandeur burst upon me. The evening was approaching apace, and slowly and reluctantly I began to ascend, after having scrambled to almost every accessible spot on the side where I was. So much did the noise and sublimity affect me, that I felt one of my unsettled fits stealing over my mind. Strange thoughts began to arise. I quickened my pace until I reached the top of the height; and the glorious view—the beautiful sloping braes of Nemplar, and the village gilded by the beams of the setting sun—burst upon me. I again longed for a view of the magnificent fan-looking cascade from a new point; and so imperative was my desire that I never thought of the danger. Stepping to the brink of the chasm, where the fearful tumult raged many feet below, I could

only catch an angular glance; and, to extend it, I caught a bush, and leaned forward upon one hand and my knees. Dreadful moment! horrid recollection!—I felt the bank giving way. A convulsive effort to regain my equilibrium, and a stifled cry for mercy, are all I recollect—my heart collapsed, and all consciousness ceased.

How long I continued in this state I have no means of ascertaining; my first sensation was a sickness that almost made me again relapse into insensibility, accompanied by a feeling of pain in all my limbs. Languidly I opened my eyes; all was dark as midnight. The roar of the waters stupified every sense. The horrors of my situation chilled my soul, and annihilated all my courage. How I retained, by the energies of despair, unaided by reason, my half pendulous position, I cannot explain. I was, for a time after consciousness returned, incapable of reflection; my mind, a chaos of fear and horror. I felt wet to the skin, from the thin spray, which fell upon and enveloped me like a cloud; a profuse sweat stood upon my forehead, and rolling down in large drops, made my eyes smart. I grasped something that sustained me, yet I scarcely knew how. Gradually the sickness left me, and cool thoughts of my perilous situation began to occupy my mind; my energies and native desire of preservation began to strengthen. My first care was to ascertain if any of my bones were broken. My legs hung over a ledge of the rock, upon which the rest of my body lay supported by my hands, which still clung to the small object I had grasped; cautiously I moved my legs, the one after the other: no bone was broken; but I found them painful in many places. Still clinging to my hold, on which I felt my whole chance of escape from being plunged into the gulf below depended, I, for some time, and by many useless efforts, attempted to get my knees upon the ledge of rock; my position was becoming every minute more pain-

ful, and I less able to retain it; my arms were benumbed, and my hands powerless, from being so long above my head. I dared not pull myself up, for the falling of stones and earth, when I first made the attempt, gave fearful note of the feeble tenure by which I was sustained. My left hand began to cramp; the fear of instant annihilation seized me; I could hold by it no longer. I grasped still more firmly by my right, and, stretching my left, found relief, by moving it gently about, to restore the circulation. I dared not bring it down, lest the other had failed; and, stretching farther than I had yet done, it touched something hard and erect; it was the stem of a stoutish bush, that grew out of a crevice in the rock. A ray of hope darted through my mind. I grasped it, still keeping my first hold, and got my knees on the ledge. To stand on my feet was now an easy effort. The joy of that movement, in the midst of my sufferings and despair, I shall never forget. I felt as if snatched from the roaring abyss. My nearly exhausted strength began to be renewed; I felt comparative comfort; yet I would have given all I possessed for my deliverance; my escape was not yet more certain, or my situation much less perilous. I found that I still held clutched in my right hand the bush that had given way, and been the cause of my disaster; but how far I had fallen, or at what part of the hideous chasm I had been mercifully arrested, I had no means to ascertain; for I stood, like a Russian peasant ready to receive the knout, with my face to the wall of rocks. I looked to the right side and to the left; all was the most impenetrable darkness. My arms, now that the weight of my body was taken from them, felt if possible more benumbed. I groped with my feet as far as I could, and found my standing very narrow, but inclining rather into than from the rock. I loosened one hand, and with an effort, that I thought would have dislocated my shoulder, brought it to my side. The tingling sensa-

tion I felt from the returning circulation, almost made me cry aloud. As I found that I still stood firm, I undid the grasp of my left hand, but not before I had turned my face from the rock. I now stood facing the raging flood; but its roaring was all I could distinguish. I now looked towards the Heavens, and thought I could perceive the stars dimly, through the thick cloud of spray in which I was involved. I leaned against the rocks, but my legs began to fail me, and trembled under the weight of my body. I was imperatively compelled, while strength remained, again to change my posture, and at length succeeded, and seated myself upon the ledge, my legs dangling over the edge.

Now, for the first time, I felt as if I were at ease, and began to calculate on the chances of my escape—feeling that my situation was so much improved that there was every reason to hope I should be able to sit out the fearful night, be once more snatched from death, and witness the dawn usher in the glorious orb of day, when I felt assured every effort would be made for my rescue. I gazed intensely down the roaring void, in hopes to see some indication that I was sought after. Malcolm I knew would strain every nerve, nay, peril his own life, to save mine. I thought I now could perceive first one dark red ball or light upon the edge of the stream, quickly moving, followed by others. The blood-red glare, as they approached, gradually became more bright, surrounded by a lighter halo; but they threw no ray where I sat, anxiously watching them. Their bearers were invisible from where I was. At length they came nearer the whirling pool, and cast a red shade on the water, where it shot over the last shelf. I could look no longer—my brain whirled, I closed my eyes, I felt as if I would have fallen, even after they were shut with all my force. I shouted with all my might, in hopes they might hear my voice. Vain effort!—no sound less

loud than the thunders of Heaven could be distinguished amid the turmoil of waters.

Again I ventured to open my eyes. The lights had disappeared. I felt, if possible, more forlorn than I had yet done; my heart began to sink; I laid myself along upon the hard rock, and, commending myself to God, became more calm and resigned to my fate. If ever there was a prayer in which true sorrow for sin, and humble confidence in the goodness and mercy of God, were poured from the human breast, it was from that fearful place. After my devotions, a calm feeling stole over my mind. I laid my head down, and, strange as it may appear, fell sound asleep as a cradled babe, and awoke refreshed. The horrors of the earlier part of the night came upon me like a fearful dream. The waters thundered in my ears. I opened my eyes, and looked up. The first rays of the sun, glancing upon the mists raised by the falls, formed numerous rainbows. I dared not to look down to the abyss, or forward to the rushing stream. With a feeling of utter helplessness, I turned my face again to the rock, and looked up. A cry of hope and thanksgiving escaped my lips—the top of the bank was only a few feet from where I lay! Rising to my knees, and holding by the bushes, I poured forth my morning prayers of thanksgiving and supplication for deliverance. I rose to my feet; the edge was only a little above my reach —my situation was still fearfully critical. Whether to risk all, and, by my own efforts, free myself, or wait until aid came, I turned over in my mind for a few minutes, as I examined the space above me. The noise of the waters, and agitation of my mind, were again beginning to render my situation more and more perilous, and I felt there was no time to lose. It was far more appalling in the glare of day than the cloud of night, and, with a desperate energy, I made the attempt, clinging to what I could grasp. I know not how I succeeded, until I lay stretched upon the verge of

the gulf, secure from danger. I dared not rise to my feet —I crept upon my hands and knees for several yards, then sprang up, nor looked behind. Unheeding the path I took, I ran until I sank exhausted, the roar of the waters no longer sounding in my ears. The sight of the place was now hateful to me. I resolved not to visit it again, or see the other falls—indeed, I was very ill, from the night's exposure to damp, and the sufferings of my mind.

Without hat or shoes, I entered the inn of the village. On raising the people from their beds, my appearance was so suspicious, that it was with difficulty they allowed me to enter; but a seven-shilling piece, which I tendered to the landlady, acted as a charm in raising her good opinion of me. I obtained a warm bed, and a cordial, while she prepared breakfast, and dried my clothes, which were soiled and wet. I evaded all her artful inquiries to learn how I had come into my present situation. It looked so improbable, even to myself, that I thought no one would give credit to my relation; and the rumours upon my former escape made me resolve to keep it secret from every one, even Malcolm, to whom I wrote to come over to me with the horses.

I remained in my room until his arrival, which was not until late in the forenoon. When he arrived, I thought he would have gone distracted with joy—he wept and laughed by turns—gazing at times with a vacant stare, then touching me to prove my identity. After he became more composed, I learned that it was currently reported and believed in Lanark, that I had perished in the river. Malcolm had waited for me with extreme impatience, after nightfall, until about ten o'clock, when he could be induced by the landlord of the inn to remain no longer, and even the landlord had become uneasy. After some delay, several men were engaged to accompany Malcolm in his search for me, and, having procured torches and a lantern, they proceeded

to the side of the river, beneath the fall, and, after searching every spot they could reach in the darkness of the night, for more than a mile on each side, they again, on Malcolm's importunities, and his offer of a handsome reward, renewed their search the second time. In an eddy not far below the fall, one of them discovered my hat, sunk near the margin, and filled with water and mud. That I had been drowned none of the party had the smallest doubt. The search had continued for upwards of three hours, their torches were burned out, and the men refused to remain longer; but no persuasion could induce Malcolm to leave the side of the swollen river, where he had remained during the short interval till day; the landlord promising to return early, with drags, and men, to search for my body. In this manner they had been employed, until all hope had fled, and they, accompanied by Malcolm, had returned to the inn, where he found my letter. Confused by hope and doubt, he had hurried on foot, and run to me. Moved by his affection, I gave him a sum of money, to reward the landlord and his assistants, telling him I was extremely sorry for the alarm and trouble I had put them all to; but that my hat having fallen in, and my not returning, were caused by a circumstance I did not choose to explain.

As I felt no serious inconvenience from my adventure, I rose and dressed, and left the village for Glasgow, after dinner. As we passed the Cartland Bridge, I shut my eyes, to prevent my seeing the river, and put spurs to my horse, to quit the scene where I had suffered so much in so short a time.

After wandering over the greater part of Scotland for several weeks, I became weary of enjoyment, and turned our horses' heads homewards by the coast of Ayrshire, with a view to visit the Island of Arran, and then cross the country to Stirling, by Loch Lomond. We had reached

Largs, on the coast of Ayrshire, and saw the Isle of Bute, the Cumbraes, and the lofty summits of Arran, rise out of the Firth of Clyde, in beautiful succession. At this time steamboats were unknown. I agreed with the landlord of the inn to have our horses carefully sent round by Glasgow, to wait us at Dumbarton, and set out for the beach, to enjoy the scene, and agree for a boat to carry us on our aquatic excursion; but the time passed on, and evening approached when we were at a considerable distance from the town. We had been sometimes upon the beach, at others among the rocks, as fancy led. I said to Malcolm that I would now return to our inn, and cause our landlord to make arrangements for a boat. As we hurried away from the shore towards the town, four men, in seamen's apparel, rushed from behind a rock, and pinioned our arms before we were aware. Two of them held pistols in their hands, threatening to fire if we uttered a sound, and pushed us before them to the spot whence they had issued. Here we found two other similar characters; the whole were stout, athletic men, of different ages, bronzed by the weather.

The place where we were was close by the beach, under a rock which beetled out for a few feet—the sea, at full, coming almost up to the base—but protruding sufficiently to conceal, except in front, a number of people. Still pointing the pistols to our breasts, and almost touching our vests, they bound our hands together behind our backs, and, taking our handkerchiefs from our pockets, covered our faces. We were silent and passive in their hands; yet in agony of fear. They placed us upon the hard rock, and we dared not ask one question, to ascertain the cause of our detention. From the few words that we could pick up out of their conversation, which was carried on in whispers, I could learn that the disposal of our persons engaged them. Malcolm could contain his fears no

longer, and began to plead for mercy for his master and himself. One of the fellows snapped his pistol; I could hear the click and smell the powder.

"You are in luck this bout," said a voice; "but don't make me try it again; she never flashed in the pan before. We don't threaten for naught; so bless your luck, and take warning."

A long period of fearful suspense ensued, in which my imagination conjured up a thousand objects of horror and suffering. The sea-breeze gently sighed among the rocks, and we heard the soft cadence of the gentle waves that fell near our feet, as the tide advanced. That we had become objects of alarm to a band of lawless men, whose lives were spent in violating the laws of their country, I was fully aware, but in what manner I knew not, unless that, by our sauntering about the rocks, they had suspected us to belong to the excise. In such cases I had heard that they were apt to do deeds of violence; but Malcolm's escape prevented me from speaking a word, or requesting an explanation. At length the sound of oars pulled steadily and with caution, fell upon my ears; and a confused suppressed sound of many voices soon followed; then there was the trampling of feet through the water and upon the rock, with the noise as if numerous articles were placed close to where we sat. Shivering from cold, we sat in anxious suspense. That I had been right in my conjecture, I felt now assured; and, at this moment, I thought they were delivering their cargo. Soon the movements ceased; we were grasped by powerful hands, again threatened with death if we uttered a word, and placed in a boat, which, by the motion, seemed to glide through the water for a considerable time. No word was spoken by those in the boat, except in whispers. Again I found it touch the beach. We were lifted out, and placed upon the edge of the water, the cords cut from our wrists, and, in one

moment after, the sound of the departing boat fell upon our gratified ears. We were alone, and the first use we made of our regained liberty, was to take the mufflings from our faces. All was dark around, nor could we discern any object except the faint phosphoric light that marked the margin of the waves here and there, like golden threads, as they broke at our feet.

We now breathed more freely; our situation, though far from comfortable, was free from the dread of immediate violence; for we stood alone and solitary upon an unknown beach—but whether in Ayrshire, Bute, or Argyle, we had no means to ascertain. From our painful position while in the boat, the time had hung so heavy on us that it appeared we had sailed a great distance. Not so much as to the value of a farthing had been taken from our persons, nor any violence used, more than was necessary to keep us silent and prevent our escape. I now, indeed, think, that the pistol which was snapped at Malcolm, had only powder in the pan, to intimidate. After consulting for some time on the best means of extricating ourselves from the necessity of passing the night on the exposed beach, we agreed to proceed inland, at any risk, whether of falls or a ducking, in quest of a roof to cover us. Before we left, I groped the face of my watch—to see it was impossible, the night was so dark. I found the hands to indicate half-past ten; so we had thus been four hours in the hands of our captors.

Stumbling or falling at every few steps, we now proceeded slowly on. Malcolm, who preceded me, once or twice plunged into quagmires, through which I followed, until I was almost spent. At length a faint light, at some distance, caught our eyes. Onwards we urged, until we could distinguish a cottage, from whose small window the light proceeded. After scrambling over a low, loose stone wall, we found ourselves in the cottage garden. I looked

in at the window, and could perceive a man and two women—one old, the other young—seated by the fire. There was no other light of any kind burning; and the dull ray of the fire gave to the interior a gloomy appearance, save where it fell on the three individuals who sat crouching before it. There being no door on the side we were on, we walked to the front, and knocked for admittance. This side of the cottage gave no indication of any light being within—the window being carefully closed. For some time we knocked in vain—no answer was made. At length, our knockings were answered by a female voice—

"What want ye here at this time o' nicht, disturbing a lone woman?"

"My good woman," I replied, "we are strangers, who know not where we are. Be so kind as open the door to us."

"Gae 'wa—gae 'wa; I will do nae sic thing; I hae nae uppitting for ye."

"My good woman," said I, in the most soothing manner I could, "do, for charity, open the door. We are like to perish from fatigue, and can proceed no further. You shall be paid whatever you ask for any accommodation you can afford, were it only to sit by your fire until daybreak."

After some time spent in entreaties, the door was cautiously opened by a female, who held a small lamp in her hand, and we were ushered into a small apartment—not the same we had seen, but a dark and uncomfortable place. She appeared to be greatly alarmed, and requested us not to make any noise, or to speak loud, whatever we heard, or we might bring her into danger for her humanity, and ourselves into greater hazard. We would, she added, have ourselves alone to blame for any evil that might follow. Taking the lamp with her, she retired,

saying she would bring us refreshments in a few minutes. We now regretted being admitted into this mysterious shelter; yet the looks of the woman—the younger of the two we had seen from the back of the house—were soft and sweet, rather inclining to melancholy. We had no time to communicate our suspicions before her return. She set before us a bottle containing some brandy, a jug of water, and a sufficient quantity of bread and cheese; and urged us to make haste and retire to bed. Having filled a glass of the liquor, she gave it to Malcolm. He drank it off at once, with great pleasure. My eyes were upon her. I saw a shade of anxiety on her countenance, succeeded by a look of satisfaction, when he returned the empty glass. I cannot account for it, but a suspicion came upon me that there was more in the giving of the liquor than courtesy; and I resolved not to taste it. She filled out the same quantity for me; but I declined it. Her look changed—she became embarrassed—and she requested me to take it, as it was to do me good. There was a something in the tone of her voice, and a benignity in her manner, that almost did away with my suspicions. I took the glass in my hand, and, requesting her to fill a cup of water for me, lifted the glass to my head. While she poured the water, I emptied the liquor into the bosom of my vest, placed, by the same movement, the glass to my mouth, and, returning it to her, drank off the water. She immediately retired; saying, with a smile, in which there was much of good nature—

"I am sorry for your poor accommodation. Good night!"

I now began to reflect upon my situation. Fear predominated. I had been led into it I scarce knew how. I blamed myself for entering; yet I was not aware of what was to take place in it. We were, unarmed and fatigued, on a part of the coast I knew not where. I looked to my

watch; it wanted a few minutes of twelve; we had not been one quarter of an hour under the roof. I looked at Malcolm, by the feeble light of the lamp, wondering why he neither moved nor spoke. He was in a dead sleep, leaning upon his high-backed wooden chair. I attempted to rouse him, in vain, by shaking him. That the brandy had been drugged, I was now convinced. My heart sank within me. I glanced round, for means to escape, and procure help to rescue my faithful servant; but there was neither window nor fireplace in the small room in which we were. I placed my hand upon the door, to rush into the other apartment; but the recollection of the man I had seen, the suspicion that there might be more in the house, and the girl's warning, detained me. As I stood, sweating with agony, I heard voices in conversation in the other apartment.

"Mary," said the old woman, "ye are owre soft-hearted for the trade we are engaged in. Ye will, some time or ither, rue yer failing."

"Mither," was the reply, "I may rue it, but ne'er repent it. I couldna, for the life o' me, keep twa human creatures pleading for shelter, wha kendna whar to gang in a mirk nicht like this. Did I do wrang, Jamie?"

"I fear you have, Mary," said the man. "If Captain Bately finds them here when he arrives—he is such a devil! —I know not what he may do to them; he is so jealous and fearful of informers; and, this trip, he has a rich cargo for the Glasgow merchants."

"I'm no feared, if ye dinna inform yersel," said the daughter; "for I hae given them baith a dram o' the Dutchman's bottle, that will keep them quiet aneugh, or I'm sair cheated; for it's nae weaker for me."

At this period of the conversation, I heard the tramp of horses' feet and the voices of several men approaching the house. The door was opened without knocking, and

several men entered. One of them demanded if all was right.

"Sae far as I hae heard, captain," said the old woman.

"So far good, old mother," replied he. "James, have you seen our agent from Glasgow?—how goes it there?"

"All right, captain," said James.

"I will then make a good run of it," rejoined the other. "But I was nearly making a bad one. Two of these land-sharks were watching our motions under the rocks; fortunately, they were observed, and put out of the way in time. All had been up with me this trip, had they got back to Largs before we were cleared. Come, lads, bait your horses quickly; we have a long way through the muirs ere dawn."

He was interrupted by the scraping and furious barking of a dog at the door where I stood listening. My heart leaped as if it would burst, my temples throbbed, and my ears rung; yet my presence of mind did not forsake me. Imitating Malcolm, I placed myself in my chair, and feigned myself dead asleep.

So many voices spoke at once that I could not make out a word that was said, except imprecations and entreaties. The lamp still burned upon the table before me. The door opened, and the captain entered, accompanied by several others.

"Dear captain," said Mary, "they are not informers—they are strangers, and fast asleep. Harm them not, for mercy's sake!"

"Silly wench!" replied the captain. "Peace!—I say, peace! These are the same rascals who were watching us this whole afternoon. How the devil came they here, if they have not some knowledge of our proceedings? Look to your arms, my lads! We will shew them they have caught a Tartar." I heard one pistol cocked, then another.

How I restrained myself from shewing my agitation I know not; I was nearly fainting.

"Captain," cried Mary, "you shall not harm them, or you must do to me as you do to them. You are as safe as ye were before I let them in. Do ye no see they are dead asleep?—try them, and believe me for aince, like a good fellow."

"I don't wish to do more than is necessary for my own safety," said he; "perhaps they are not what I take them for; but fellows will talk of what they see. Taking Malcolm by the shoulder, he gave him a shake, as I saw through between my eyelids, nearly closed. "Fellow," he cried, "who are you?" Malcolm neither heard nor felt him; so powerful had the opiate been. He passed the lamp before his eyes, and made a blow at his head with the but-end of his pistol. Malcolm moved not a muscle of his face. He was satisfied. After passing the lamp so close before my eyes that one of my eyebrows was nearly singed by the flame, he set it slowly upon the table, and I felt the muzzle of the pistol touch my temple. I moved not a muscle of my face. It was withdrawn, and I heard him pace the room for a moment, muttering curses at the young woman, who endeavoured to soothe his rage. No other person spoke. He paused at length, and, lifting the lamp, held it again to my face.

"I am satisfied—all is right," said he; "but, if you dare again, Mary, to do the same, you and your mother may go hang for me—that's all. Come, boys, be moving—we lose time." In a few minutes afterwards, I heard the sound of their horses' feet leaving the house. My lungs recovered their elasticity; I breathed more freely. Mary entered, and, lifting the lamp to remove it, looked upon us in tears. I would have spoken, but refrained, lest I had given farther alarm and uneasiness to one so kind and humane. She looked upon us, smiling through her tears.

"Poor men!" she said, "yer hearts were at ease when mine, for your sake and my ain, was like to break; yet, I dinna think he wad killed ye, devil as he is, if ye didna fight wi' him; but he wad carried ye awa to Holland, or France; and then what wad yer puir wives, if ye hae them, hae suffered, no kenning what had come owre ye? Oh, that I could but get free o' them, and Jamie gie up this way o' life!' (A heavy sigh followed.) "But ye are sleeping sound and sweet, when I am sleepless. O Jamie, will ye no leave thae night adventures, and be content wi' what ye can earn through the day?" She gently shut the door as she retired, and all became still as death. With a feeling of security I laid myself upon the bed, and soon fell into a profound sleep. It was late in the morning ere I awoke. Malcolm was awake; his movements had roused me. He was still confused from the effects of the opiate, and was gazing wildly around the apartment. After taking a heavy draught of the water, he became quite collected. I rose, and we entered the larger part of the cottage, where the mother and daughter were busy preparing breakfast. After the usual salutations, and an apology for the badness of our lodging, I inquired how far we were from Largs, and was informed it was about three miles from where we were. Feeling myself much indisposed, and threatened with a severe cold, I resolved to return home as direct as I could, not choosing to run the risk of any more such adventures. I despatched Malcolm to the inn, to prevent the horses being sent off to Dumbarton, and to bring them as quick as possible to where I now was. During his stay, I became more and more interested in the gentle Mary. She was not in the least embarrassed, as she thought that I was unconscious of what had passed through the night. I felt it would be a cruel return for her kindness to mention it, and alarm her fears for her lover, for such I supposed him to be. I could have gained no object by doing so. I

already knew, from what I had heard, that she was connected with a band of smugglers, whose calling she loathed.

There was a firmness of purpose, mixed with her gentleness, displayed during the time the band and their captain were in the house, which shewed I could gain no information as to them, from her; neither did I feel any anxiety to know more than I did, or ever to be in their company again. Had I had the wish to give information of the lawless band, I could only inform as to the females; the others had managed so well I could not have identified one of them.

At length my horses arrived, and I prepared to depart. As I took my leave, I put five guineas into the hand of Mary. She looked at the sum, then at me, and refused to accept any remuneration for our shelter.

"Keep it," said I, "to enable you to induce James to quit his dangerous trade." She blushed, trembled, and then became pale as death. My heart smote me for what I had said. She gave me such an anxious, imploring look, as her trembling lips murmured—

"Oh, what shall I do?"

"Fear nothing, Mary, from me; I owe you much more for your goodness of heart. If you and James will come to reside near Allan Gow, he shall do all in his power to assist you." Amidst blessings from the mother, and the silent gratitude of the daughter, I rode off, on my way to Glasgow, and on the following day was under my parents' roof.

It is now many years since then. James and Mary are settled in the neighbourhood, and prosperous. Malcolm is still with me; but whether servant or companion, I can scarce tell at times. When my strange imaginations come upon me—for I have never been, for any length of time free from them—he is almost master of my small establishment.

THE YOUNG LAIRD.*

In one of the midland counties of Scotland lies the estate of Sir Patrick Felspar. On this estate, and on the southern declivity of a moderately-high hill, stood, about thirty years ago, two old-fashioned farmsteads, called Nettlebank and Sunnybraes, of which, as we have a long story to tell, we can only say that the former—being the largest—was tenanted by Mr. Black, and the latter by William Chrighton· that the family of the one consisted of a boy and a girl, called *Gilbert* and *Nancy;* and that the other was the father of an only son, named *George.*

The harvest had been concluded, and preparations were making for lifting the potato crop, when Mrs. Black was taken ill of a fever; and her husband, on discovering that she was seriously indisposed, after sending the servant girl to "tell Elspeth Roger that her mistress wished to speak with her," left the house, to which he did not return for several days. Elspeth, who was the wife of one of the farm servants, being thus sent for, hastened to her mistress's presence. On entering the room, and seeing the state of the sufferer, she saw at once that a sick nurse was indispensable; and, though she had herself a husband and two

* We may claim for this tale the peculiarity of its having been the first essay of its author, Alexander Bethune, the self-educated "Fifeshire labourer." This excellent and ingenious man became subsequently well known by his volume of "Tales and Sketches of the Scottish Peasantry," published by Mr. Adam Black, and designated at the time a literary phenomenon. It was truly said of him by the Spectator: "Alexander Bethune, if he had written anonymously, might have passed for a regular litterateur." Along with his brother John, "the Fifeshire forester," he published, in 1839, "Practical Economy"—a work which deserves to be reprinted and spread among the people, as containing the true secret of domestic happiness, so well exemplified in the contented and virtuous lives of its humble authors.—Ed.

children to attend to, and, consequently, could be but ill spared from her own house, she readily offered her services, and was accepted.

By her advice, medical assistance was immediately procured; and the kind-hearted matron continued to attend the sick-bed of her mistress, night and day, for three weeks, during which period Mr. Black was seldom at home. Hitherto, the doctor had entertained hopes of his patient's recovery; but, on the eighteenth day, to Elspeth's anxious inquiries, he only shook his head, and bade her "not be surprised whatever should happen." His words were deemed ominous: a messenger was despatched to bring Mr. Black home; and, on the following day, his wife died. Upon this sad occasion, Nancy seemed to be the only real mourner; for, though her father and brother hung their heads, and looked demure for a day or two, even the semblance of sorrow vanished before the exciting potations which they swallowed at the *dregy*.* Nancy, however, did feel the loss of her mother, and mourned it as deeply as her young heart could. And, as she had been oftener than once rebuked with great severity by her remaining parent, for what he called her *blubbering*, when grief overcame her she frequently sought a hidingplace for her tears in the house of Elspeth, who, with the heart and the feelings of her sex, shared the sorrows of the poor girl while she strove to alleviate them. But she was soon deprived of this refuge; for, in a few days after the funeral, Elspeth, who had probably caught the infection while attending the deathbed of her mistress, found herself in the grasp of the same terrible disease which had carried her mistress off; and Nancy, to avoid the same fate, was debarred from entering the door of her humble friend and only comforter.

On such occasions, to have one who will listen patiently

* Repast, so called, to which, in some parts of the country, the friends of the deceased are invited after the funeral.

to a recital of our sorrows, and respond to them with a sigh, a look of sympathy, a tear, or a word, in which the tone of the voice bespeaks a reciprocity of feeling, is comfort, and almost the only comfort of which the case admits; for the lengthened speech and the studied harangue, containing, as they are supposed to do, "the words of consolation," often fall upon the ear without reaching the heart. Such a comforter Nancy Black found in George Chrighton, or, as he was universally termed, *the laddie Geordie*. This boy, who was one of her schoolfellows, and nearly of her own age, attracted by her sorrowful looks and the tears which sometimes stole down her cheeks, left the boisterous sports of the other boys, and devoted his hours of play to walking with her, or sitting in some retired corner, and listening to her little "tale of wo." Hitherto, the roads by which they came and went had been different; but now he discovered a new one, by following which he could accompany her till within a short distance of Nettlebank; and, at the place where they had separated in the evening, he always waited for her appearance on the next morning. Youthful friendships are soon formed. Ere disappointment has done its work, and experience taught its salutary, though painful lesson, there is little room for suspicion on either side, and the hearts of the parties amalgamate, like meeting waters. Thus, the two became *friends*, almost before they could understand the meaning of the word.

While Nancy Black and her boyish companion were thus forming an affection for each other, as pure, and certainly as deep, as any which ever subsisted between persons of their years, Elspeth Roger was lying dangerously ill. But her sickness was not "unto death:" and, after being confined for twenty-four days, during which her life had been several times despaired of by all who saw her, she began to recover. Scarcely, however, was she able to move about, and bestow some attention on their household concerns,

when her husband began to complain ; and, in a few hours, he was laid upon that bed from which she had arisen, with all the symptoms of a most malignant case of the same disease. Elspeth, who, in the midst of many struggles, and without the outward show of more than ordinary affection, was attached to her husband, now became fixed to his bedside. Forgetting the weakness consequent on her own imperfect recovery, and fearful of allowing hands less careful than her own to approach him, she attended him, night and day, with a solicitude which none save those who have all they value in the world at stake, can comprehend. Medical advice was promptly procured. But, in spite of medical skill, tender nursing, and tears shed apart, David Roger died. Of Elspeth's grief upon this occasion, it were superfluous to speak. Suffice it that, after many years had passed by, the general expression of her countenance, and the tear which occasionally stole down her cheek at the mention of his name, showed that she had not forgotten the husband of her youth.

Though this event must have been distressing to the widow, her distress was aggravated when, on the second day from that on which her husband had been interred, Mr. Black told her that, "as he had engaged another servant, and required his house, she must remove at the term." The first week of November was now past; the term was on the 22d of that month; every house in the neighbourhood was either occupied, or already let for the coming year; and this information came to the heart of Elspeth like a thunder-shock. It was what she had never dreamed of, and never thought of providing for. For herself, she might have been careless; but when she reflected on her children, the feelings of the mother awoke in her bosom, and made her, for the time, superior to despair. Day after day, she went in quest of a hovel to shelter them from the rigour of the coming winter, and night after night she returned

without having found one. It seemed as if Heaven had determined to make her a houseless wanderer; for not a single untenanted habitation could she hear of. But we must leave her to pursue her fruitless search, and attend, for a little, to what was going on elsewhere.

One evening, after George Chrighton had returned from school, without taking time to snatch his accustomed morsel of bread from the *aumry*, he inquired for his father, and hurried off in quest of him. Having discovered the object of his search in the stack-yard—"Father," cried the boy, as soon as he was within ear-shot, "hae ye heard that Mr. Black intends to make Elspeth Roger flit at the term; an' she canna get a house for hersel an' her bairns in a' the country?"

"I did hear she was gaun to flit," said the old man, composedly; "but whatfor canna she get a house?"

"I dinna ken," was the boy's eager reply; "but she's been seekin ane this aught days, an mair; an' Nan Black says, if somebody doesna help her, she maun tak her twa bairns, an' gang an' beg.—Noo, faither, could we no do something? There's our auld barn: I would mak the clay-cats,* an' we might pit up a lum; an' I would help Jock to howk a hole i' the wa', an' it wouldna tak muckle to get a *windock;* an'—an'—I've forgotten what I was gaun to say; but I'm sure we can pit up the lum; an' the woman canna lie out by."

"I daresay ye're richt, laddie," said his father, after raising his hat, and scratching the hinder part of his head for a few seconds. "The auld barn micht do. There's some bits o' sticks lyin at the end o' the byre, an' some auld nails i' the stable—as mony o' baith as would be required, I believe. Jock could bring a cartfu o' clay the nicht yet—he could mak the cats the morn; ye micht bide at hame a day frae the school, an' carry them in; an' I could pit up the lum mysel."

* The materials of which a mud-wall is constructed in many parts of Scotland.

"But it would need a hallan too, faither," rejoined George.

"Hoot ay," said his father, "it would need a hallan, an' a hantle things forby; an', after a' has been done that we can do, the place will be but little, an' unco inconvenient; but it 'll aye be a hole to shelter her an' her bairnies frae the drift, afore they can get a better. An', e'en though the scheme had been less feasible than it is, it maks my heart glad to see that—laddie as ye are—ye hae a thought for ither folk's distress."

"Na," interrupted George, "na, faither; it wasna me—it was Nan Black spoke about it first, an' I only promised to tell ye."

"Weel, weel, laddie," rejoined the other, "I'm glad to hear that Nan Black, as ye ca' her, is likely to turn out a better *woman*, if she be spared, than ever her faither was a *man*—but, as he has a' his actions to account for, of him I would say naething." With these words, the worthy farmer was about to resume his labours, when his son, flushed with the success of his plan, exclaimed—

"But will we no tell her, faither? Her mind canna be at ease afore she ken about some place."

"That's weel minded too," said the father—"she's maybe gotten a house already; but, in case she hasna, gang ye owre to your mither, an' tell her I bade ye get a piece; an', when ye've gotten it, ye can rin yont, some time afore it be dark, an' see a' about it. An' ye can tell her that, if she likes, she's welcome to our auld barn, for a year; an', if she taks it, we's no fa' oot about the rent."

Though George obeyed his father so far as to go the length of the house door, he could not find time to go in for his promised *piece;* and, without opening it, he turned, and set off at the top of his speed in the direction of Nettlebank.

Return we now to the widow's cottage. The poor wo-

man was far from having recovered, when she was called upon to attend the deathbed of her husband. The fatigue, terror, anxiety, and want of rest, from which she had suffered during that period, might have been sufficient to break down even the strongest constitution. When to these are added weeks of wandering in quest of a habitation, the reader will hardly be surprised when he is told that her animal strength was gone—her spirits sunk, and despair seemed to be closing around her. With a frame completely worn out, a head which ached, blistered feet, and, we might almost add, a "bleeding heart," she sat by her fire one evening—her head resting on her hand, and her eyes fixed upon her children, while sighs convulsed her bosom. She wished to commit her little ones to the care of their Maker; but such was the state of her mind, that she fancied she could not perform even this duty, and the thought called forth another and a deeper sigh. While she was thus employed, Nancy Black opened the door unperceived, and, standing at her side, awoke her from her dream of despondency by saying, in a half whispering, half faltering voice—"Elspeth, dinna break your heart. I think I ken where you'll get a house, noo. I was speaking about you, the day, to Geordie Chrighton, at the school, an' he says they could soon mak a house o' their auld barn; and that his faither will never hesitate"——

To this the mother was listening, and almost thinking the news too good for being true, when the speaker was interrupted by some one coming against the inner door of the apartment with such force as nearly to break it. On hearing the noise, the widow rose to give the stranger admittance; but he waited not for her services. Putting one hand to his nose—the part which had produced the noise—and the other to the latch, before another second had elapsed, George Chrighton stood in the middle of the floor, panting from the rapidity of his march; and, without

taking time to recover breath, he began to deliver his message by saying—"Elspeth, my father sent me owre to tell ye that, if ye want a house, ye may get our auld barn. Jock's to bring a cartful o' clay—he's to mak the cats the morn; I'm to bide at hame frae the school, an' carry them in; an' my faither's to put up the lum. An'—what is't I was gaun to say?—ou ay—tak it—tak it, Elspeth; an', if he'll no gie ye it for naething, I'll keep a' the bawbees I get, to help ye to pay for't." Here he paused, fairly out of breath. The substance of his message, however, was delivered, and he now stood silent, and almost fearful of hearing that she had already got a house.

The widow, bewildered by her own feelings, the excited manner of the boy, and the intelligence which he brought, was also silent. Nor was it till Nancy Black had whispered, "It's true enough—Geordie never tells lies," that she recollected it was her part to make a reply.

Hitherto the boy had not been aware of the presence of his schoolfellow; but no sooner had he heard her voice, than his eye brightened, and he turned as if to seek the reward of his labours from her; and—girl as she was—he found it in her approving smile. But that smile was of short duration; for as soon as she had a full view of his face, it passed away, and, hurrying toward him, she exclaimed, in an anxious tone—"What ails you, Geordie? What's that on your upper lip, an' your chin?"

"What is't?" repeated the youngster, drawing the back of his hand across the place alluded to, as if to ascertain if anything was wrong in that quarter; and then, examining the hand so employed, he continued—"What is't? It's bluid; but where it comes frae I canna tell." After a short pause, during which he recollected the opposition he had met from the door—"It's my nose—it's just my nose," he added, laughing as he spoke, to free the heart of Nancy from those apprehensions, the shade of which he

saw gathering on her countenance. "I didna ken the door was steekit afore my nose played crack on the sneck —and noo it's bluidin."

Sure enough, his nose was bleeding, and had been so ever since he came in, though unobserved. The attention of the widow and Nancy was instantly directed to staunch the bleeding: the latter brought the key from the outer door, and the former placed it between his shoulders, bathing his temples at the same time with cold water. In a few minutes the blood ceased to flow, and, after his face had been washed, Nancy's smile returned.

When they were about to depart, the widow, taking one in each hand, and drawing them close together, said— "May God bless ye baith, my bonny bairns! An', in his ain way an' time, He *will* bless ye; for, when men and women had forsaken me, an' my heart was sinking in despair, ye have provided a hame for the widow and the faitherless. May His blessing rest on ye, an' may He be your friend when ither friends forsake you!"

The *clay-cats* were made, and carried in, in the manner proposed; the lum was constructed, and the old barn made as commodious as possible; and, in a few days after, Elspeth and her two children came to inhabit it. But, though it was only intended for a temporary residence, when a twelvemonth had passed, she did not leave it. She had made herself useful in many ways to the farmer, by assisting him with his farm-work; and, as both felt loath to part, she became a sort of fixture on the farm of Sunnybraes.

There is still one circumstance connected with her removal, which must be noticed. Mr. Black, in general, did little to deserve commendation; but he could not endure the idea of any one becoming more popular than himself; and, as William Chrighton was warmly praised for his conduct in this affair, he soon began to regard him with a

feeling which was more akin to deep-rooted hatred than ill-will.

We now pass over a period of six years, during which nothing of importance occurred—save that those who, at the commencement of this period, had been mere infants, were now boys and girls; those who had been boys and girls, were now men and women; and of those who had then been men and women, many were now in their graves. Nor of those who remained had a single individual escaped, without having undergone some change. In some, the gaiety of youth had been exchanged for the thoughtful expression of maturer years; upon the foreheads of others, grey hairs were seen where glossy ringlets were wont to wave; the rosy hue which had once adorned the cheek, was now broken into streaks; and on brows formerly smooth, the handwriting of care was now visible.

About this time, Sir Patrick Felspar, after being absent for a number of years, paid a short visit to his tenants. On coming to Sunnybraes, and expressing himself highly satisfied with William Chrighton's manner of farming and general management, that individual thought it a favourable opportunity for introducing Elspeth and her two children to his notice. The story seemed to affect him, and he immediately proposed taking the boy into his own service. This proposal was agreed to; and, at his departure, Sandy Roger accompanied him to London, where we must leave him.

George Chrighton, though only a schoolboy when we last noticed him, was now a stout-looking, well-built young man, rather above the middle size, and, for some time past, he had been his father's only assistant at Sunnybraes. Nor was the change which had been produced on Nancy Black less conspicuous. From being a mere girl, in the course of six years she had become a beautiful maiden, in

the last of her teens, and with a natural modesty, which, though it added greatly to her other charms, almost unfitted her for the situation she occupied in her father's household. Of this youthful pair, it was generally surmised in the neighbourhood, that the attachment which had begun in their school days, had "grown with their growth, and strengthened with their strength," till it had ripened into love.

Such surmises have often been made before, upon occasions where there was not even the shadow of a foundation for them. But, in the present instance, the gossips and tattlers were not so far wrong; for the two were really lovers, though, from the implacable temper of Mr. Black, they found it necessary to conceal their affection; and, for two years more, in as far as an open confession is concerned, they did conceal it. They were not, however, wholly without their "stolen interviews," which, though "few and far between," with the additional disadvantage of being *short*, were, in this case, sufficient to keep the flame alive. They also found means of occasionally exchanging notices of each other upon *paper*—that *dernier resort* of all unfortunate lovers.

Catherine Roger, who had hitherto been thought and spoken of as the *lassie Kate*, was now beginning to expand into the young woman, and—smitten with her charms, as wise people began to suppose—Andrew Sharp, one of Mr. Black's farm-servants, had, of late, become rather a regular visitor at her mother's. At first, he came with a quantity of worsted, "to see if she would knit a pair of stockings for him;" next, he "came to see if she would darn the heels of a pair of stockings;" and, by and by, he sometimes ventured to "come owre, just to speer for her." While his business was thus, to all appearance, exclusively with the mother, he frequently found an opportunity of stealing a look at the daughter, or, more fortunate still, of exchanging

a word with her, as if by the by. It is probable, however, that the former—

> "Wi' a woman's wyles, could spy
> What made the youth sae bashfu an' sae grave;"

and, whatever her fears might be, there is no reason to doubt that she was

> "Weel pleased to see her bairn respected like the lave."

Andrew, though young, was by no means deficient in shrewdness; he was naturally of an obliging turn—a quiet conscientious lad—a great favourite with his young mistress, and he was sometimes made the bearer of those paper messengers which went between the lovers.

The leases of both farms were now within a year of being out, and both the farmers had begun to use what interest they could to have them renewed. As to the success of William Chrighton, those who pretended to see farther than their neighbours, shook their heads, and seemed uncertain; but of Mr. Black being successful, no one seemed to entertain the smallest doubt. Sir Patrick, of late, had left the management of those matters wholly to his factor, Mr. Goosequill; and, in the esteem of this individual, Mr. Black now stood deservedly high. Scarcely a month had been allowed to pass, for the last two years, without a present of poultry, eggs, butter, or cheese being sent from Nettlebank to the factor. Upon these occasions, Gilbert was commonly the bearer, and he always stayed over night, and either drank toddy with the representative of the laird, or poured flatteries into the ear of Miss Grizzy, his daughter. At these doings, far-sighted people shook their heads again, and said that Mr. Black's hens were never sold in a rainy day, except to serve some purpose, and darkly hinted at the possibility of his taking both farms.

Shortly after these matters began to be agitated, the old

knight died, and was succeeded by his son, who had always been spoken of on the estate as the *young laird*. It was further understood that the young Sir Patrick had been abroad for the last nine months; and, according to the accounts which were circulated, he was not expected home for several months to come. This circumstance afforded an excuse to Mr. Goosequill for declining to renew the lease of Sunnybraes, as he alleged that he could not do so till he had positive instructions from the young laird to that effect. At the end of four months, a letter from Sandy Roger informed his mother that Sir Patrick had returned to London shortly after his father's death; and, since his return, that he had treated him with a degree of kindness such as he had never expected to experience from a master. The game was now up; and the factor, finding that it was so, despatched the following letter to the laird:—

"Sir,—As you have been graciously pleased to continue that trust which your much-lamented father was pleased to repose in me—a trust which, from my knowledge of local affairs, I hope I shall be able to discharge with honour to myself and advantage to you—and as the leases of your farms of Nettlebank and Sunnybraes expire at Martinmas ensuing, I should hold myself wanting in that interest which I have ever felt for the prosperity of the family, if I did not acquaint you of the following particulars. William Chrighton, the present tenant of Sunnybraes, has now made application to have the lease of that farm renewed; but, as he is a man of no substance, belongs to the old school, is incapable of conducting improvements upon an extensive scale, and merely struggles on from year to year, I have declined to give him any answer till I should know what was your pleasure thereanent. I have also received an offer for the said farm from Mr. Black, bearing an advance of rent. This gentleman is in a thriving way; he has a turn

for business, and everything prospers with him; he has extensive connections, and, what is of more importance to the present purpose, he has a son of age to take the management of a farm, who is an excellent agriculturist. Mr. Black proposes to take both farms—Nettlebank at the old rent, and the other at an advance; and, if his offers are accepted, I have no hesitation in saying that he will soon improve this portion of your estate to a great extent. I would therefore recommend him to your notice. Hoping that *that* knowledge of local affairs which I have acquired from long experience, may still be of some service to you, I am, Sir, your very humble servant,

"GAVIN GOOSEQUILL."

To this communication, the factor, in due time, received the following laconic reply:—

"SIR,—I thank you for your friendly advice, and the attention to my concerns which you manifest; but, as it is my wish that the old tenants should remain, you may let Messrs. Chrighton and Henderson have their farms at the old rent, if they choose.—Yours,

"P. FELSPAR."

This entirely disconcerted the schemes of these friends. Mr. Henderson was the tenant who had been in Nettlebank before Mr. Black; and the young laird, who had not been in Scotland since he was four years of age, as yet knew nothing of his having left it. Gavin Goosequill felt rather at a loss how to proceed; but, recollecting that "in the multitude of counsellers there is safety," he determined to consult Mr. Black, and, for this purpose, paid a visit to Nettlebank. What was the result of this consultation is not exactly known; but, as Mr. Black shook hands with the factor, and was about to bid him "good night," Andrew Sharp, who stood waiting with the horse, heard the latter

say—"Well, I think we have it after all. I shall delay matters as long as I can, and then write, recommending farther delay; this will give us time to do something, and, if I am not deceived, both will be yours in the end."

The oracular words "do something," and "both will be yours," made an impression on Andrew's mind. When he reflected on the expiration of the leases, the character of his master, and the surmises which he had heard, he felt convinced that the first part of the factor's speech had a reference to the farms, while the last part of it implied some plot, which was hatching, to forward their schemes. This conviction suggested the probability that William Chrighton would not be allowed to remain in Sunnybraes; and, as his removal must be attended with the removal of Catherine Roger, to he knew not how great a distance, he felt somewhat spiritless and disconcerted. Time seemed to stand still; and, after ruminating for a season on the means of averting such a misfortune, he took a pair of stockings, and, having placed them on the hearthstone of his bothie—no one being present—he proceeded to pound that part of them called the *heels* with the head of the poker. By this means, he soon produced something very like a worn hole in each; and then, taking them under his arm, and putting a quantity of worsted into his pocket, he set off to Sunnybraes to get them darned. When there, as his "dulness" did not leave him so quickly as he had anticipated, and as he was, moreover, loath to sit silent in the presence of one whose good opinion he was so anxious to procure, while Elspeth was darning the stockings, he told Catherine the whole story—what he had heard the factor say, and the conclusions and inferences which he had drawn therefrom—taking care, however, neither to mention his "dulness," nor the manner in which he had produced the holes in the heels of his stockings.

"Weel, lassie," said Elspeth when he was gone, "frae

what we ken aboot Mr. Black, the thing's clear enough. He's lookin after Sunnybraes for his muckle gomeril o' a son; an', if Gavin Goosequill can get it for him, by hook or by crook, by lies or by true tales, he'll no want it lang. The hens, an' the jucks, an' the geese, an' the turkeys, that gaed frae Nettlebank, hae done their *errand* weel enough, I warrant them; an' noo we maun try to do oors—at least, we maun *try*—to help them that hae been helpers to baith you an' me."

"But hoo can we help them, mither?" inquired Catherine, with a look of surprise—"what can we do?"

"I'll tell ye what we can do, lassie," rejoined her mother; "the young laird will never hear a word o' truth aboot either his farmers or his farms. It's easy for Gavin Goosequill to stap his head as fu' o' lies as it can haud; an', when this is done, it's but saying that the laird wants Mr Black to get baith the farms; an' syne, Mr. Chrighton, an' you an' me too, maun flit. Noo, as your brither, Sandy, is the young laird's servant, ye maun e'en try if ye can write a letter to him, an' tell him o' a' this ongaun. Though it's no very weel written, he'll maybe mak oot to read it; an', if he's no sair changed since he left his mother an' his hame, *he'll* tell the laird the truth."

Catherine was ready to comply with her mother's proposal. A letter was accordingly written; and, after being closed with a piece of shoemakers' rosin, instead of wax, and supplied with an address by George Chrighton, it was, on the following day, put in the post-office. In about three weeks from the date of this letter, though no answer was returned to it, Mr. Goosequill received the following note from the laird, which appears to have been an answer to another communication of his.

"Dear Sir,—I have received yours of the 1st August; and I am now convinced that the affair requires delay and

serious consideration. I shall endeavour to turn your advice to some account; and, in the meantime, you need give yourself no farther trouble about the letting of the farms.—Yours, P. FELSPAR.

"P.S.—You may assure the tenants that neither of them will suffer injustice at my hands."

Things now appeared favourable; but, as Mr. Goosequill seldom trusted more to appearances than was necessary, he took an early opportunity of calling upon William Chrighton, to say that "he believed any farther application on his part for the farm would be useless, and must only tend to irritate the laird." He hinted, farther, that, if Sir Patrick should raise an action against him, he might get heavy damages for the bad repair in which the steading then was. After having expended a good deal of learning and law-Latin in illustrating this subject, Mr. Goosequill concluded, by saying, that, so far as he could judge from his last communication, and as Sir Patrick was a proud man, and could not endure to be thwarted in his plans, the best course he could adopt was, simply, to pay his rent, and quit the farm at Martinmas.

To these proposals the old farmer demurred. "I have always paid my rent on rent-day," said he; "I have made many improvements upon the farm to enable me to pay that rent; and for the steading, though I am not bound to keep it in repair, by building a new barn and cart-sheds, at my own expense, I have made it worth at least sixty pounds more than it was at the beginning of the tack. Now," continued he, "I can see no reason the laird can have for being *irritated* at me for endeavouring to keep possession of the farm on which I was born, and on which I have lived till I am growing an old man."

"You may do as you please," said Mr. Goosequill, gravely, —"only I have warned you; and, if you are determined

to persist, you may save yourself the trouble of writing; for I have Sir Patrick's authority for saying that he is coming down to Scotland to settle these matters himself."

Having thus counselled, he adjourned to Nettlebank, where he no doubt counselled more; but through this labyrinth we shall not follow him. Only Andrew Sharp, who again brought out his horse, heard him say, as he was about to depart, "Well, I think I have the old scrub for the new barn, and, in the meantime, Mr. Gilbert, who is really a smart lad, must try to do a little."

"Fear not for him," rejoined the other; "he knows what he is working for—Miss Grizzy's fair face is worth wanting an hour's sleep for ony time."

Many of our readers will still recollect the disastrous harvest of 1817: October was begun before harvest-work commenced at all; and, after it did commence, day after day the rain poured down as if the sky had been an ocean supported by a sieve. It was after an evening of storm and darkness had succeeded to one of these distressing days, that a stranger arrived at Nettlebank, and requested lodgings for the night. The servant girl, who opened the door, said, "She wouldna let him in, but she would tell her master." Her master accordingly came, and, without ceremony, told him to begone, for he harboured no wandering vagabonds about his *town*.

The stranger attempted to plead his ignorance of the country and the darkness of the night, as excuses for being allowed to remain; but Mr. Black cut him short, by telling him, in a tone which was distinctly heard at the farthest corner of the house, to march off, or he would instantly unchain the house-dog and set loose the terriers, and let them make a supper of him. Oaths and abusive language followed; but the stranger did not wait to hear more. He had proceeded as far as the corner of the garden wall, where a wicket gate communicated with the front

door, and was muttering vengeance to himself, when he was accosted by Nancy.

"I am sorry," said she, "we cannot give you lodgings for the night—my father is so passionate; but here is something to help you on your journey." The stranger seemed unwilling to take the shilling, which she was attempting to put into his hand. "It is hardly worth your acceptance," said she; "but it is all I have at present. I cannot tell how much I feel on your account—exposed as you have been to the rain. But, as this is no night for a stranger to be abroad in, only come with me a few steps, till I can procure a guide to conduct you to the next farm, where you will find shelter."

"The farmer of the next farm may perhaps treat me like the farmer of this—and what then?" inquired the stranger, whose wrath had not yet altogether subsided.

"God forbid!" was Nancy's reply; "but he will not—I know he will not." She then led the way to a low door, through the seams of which light was visible, and, tapping gently, pronounced the word "Andrew." As soon as the door was opened—"Here is a stranger," said she, addressing the young man who acted as porter; "and when I grow richer I will endeavour to reward you, if you would get your greatcoat and shew him the road; or rather go with him to Sunnybraes, and tell them he wants lodgings for the night"—then, lowering her voice almost to a whisper, and drawing closer as she spoke, she added—"and, if they seem to hesitate, draw George aside, and tell him I sent you." The lad was hastening to obey his mistress's orders, when she called after him, "Stay—I had forgot—bring a greatcoat for him also."

The stranger, who had now caught a full view of her in the light which issued from the open door, thought he had seldom seen a fairer face or a finer form, and, wet as he was, he felt a wish to cultivate her acquaintance by farther

conversation; but she gave him no time; for, almost before the last word was spoken, she disappeared.—"Tell George!" muttered he, as he listened to her retiring footsteps—"this is something, however."

At Sunnybraes, Andrew found his young mistress's provisionary clause altogether unnecessary; for, no sooner had he announced his errand, than the old farmer rose to make way for the stranger: "Get up, George," said he to his son; "an' you, Meg," turning to his wife, "lift out owre your wheel, an' let the poor lad in by to the fire. An' d'ye hear?—if ever whisky did mortal creature guid, it maun be on a night like this; sae, though I drink nane mysel, gang ye and gie him a glass."

The stranger was accordingly placed by the fire, and a glass was brought; but still it was considered that, as he must be drenched to the skin, a shift of clothes would be necessary. On this proposal being made, Mrs. Chrighton cast a significant look, first at her son, and then at her husband:—

"Hoot, woman," cried the latter, interpreting her look, "bring the duds, an', if ye hae ony fear about them, the lassie Kate can gie ye a help to wash them, some weety day. An' weety days are like to be owre rife noo, for ony guid they're doin.—Our guidewife," he continued, addressing their guest, "has aye been fear'd for infectious diseases since a beggar-wife brought the fever to the town mair than fourteen years back. But, though ye had five-and-twenty fevers—ay, fifty o' them—that's no enough to let you get your death o' cauld wi' thae weet claes on; sae ye maun e'en consent to shift yoursel."

The stranger's language was a strange mixture of the best English and the broadest Scotch; and this circumstance, after exciting a degree of surprise in the minds of all, induced the guidwife to make some indirect inquiries concerning his profession and station in society.

"I've been thinkin ye're no just a here-a-wa man, by your tongue," said she; "an', if I'm no mista'en, ye've seen better days; for, when I was bringin butt your wet claes to get them dried, though your bit jacket an' your breeks were just corduroy, I couldna help noticin that there is no a bit bonnier linen inowre our door than the sark ye had on."

To these observations it seemed as if the stranger scarce knew how to reply—he passed his hand across his brow, and was silent for some seconds. But, on recovering himself, he told them that his name was Duncan Cowpet—that he had been born in Scotland, but his parents had removed to England when he was very young—that he had lately been a traveller for a house in London, but his master being now dead, and himself out of employment, he had thought of visiting his native country; he added that, though his dress was rather plain, he was not destitute of money, and concluded by offering to pay them for the trouble they had already been at on his account, and also for his night's lodging.

"Na, na," said the old farmer, his eyes brightening as he spoke, "we never took payment for sheltering the head of a houseless stranger, nor will we noo. But ye were sayin that ye're out o' employment; as this is a backward season, an' we have a hantle to do, an' mair than a', as I'm turned frail and feckless mysel, an' unco sair fashed wi' rheumatisms, I've been thinkin if ye could consent to stay an' help us for a owk or twa, maybe ye would be nae waur, an' we could gie you as guid wages as ony ither body."

To this proposal Duncan offered no objection, only he wished to stipulate for a bed in the house, as, he said, he had never been accustomed to lie in barns; and, as a guarantee that he would neither injure their property, nor run off without giving them notice, he offered to place five

guineas in the hands of the guidman—remarking, that it was all the ready money he had about him. "And as to wages," he continued, "I *wull* ask no more than what you *wull* think I work for." The five guineas were accepted, not as a guarantee for his good behaviour, but that they might be in safe keeping. He was given to understand that he might have them at any time; and, when the family retired to rest, he was accommodated with a bed in the house.

On the following morning, which happened to be fair, he was employed in the labours of the season; and, though he manifested an uncommon degree of awkwardness, George Chrighton, who was his fellow *bandster*, did everything in his power to instruct and assist him in his new profession; so that he succeeded in performing his part of the labour till breakfast time. After this meal had been despatched, as each youngster drew closer to his favourite lass, Duncan, following the example thus set before him, began to attach himself to Catherine Roger, who, though the youngest, and perhaps the fairest, seemed to have no sweetheart present. But Catherine, though thus left alone, was far from encouraging his attentions; and, with great dexterity, she contrived, during what remained of the breakfast hour, always to keep her mother's person between her and him—thus defeating his strong inclination to imitate the conduct of some of his fellow-labourers, by placing his arm around her neck.

On rising to recommence the labours of the day, Duncan found that his hands were blistered, and that it would be extremely difficult for him to resume his work; but George again assisted him, by inquiring if any of the lasses would be so kind as come and dress the injured parts. Catherine, notwithstanding her former coyness, was the first to obey. Bounding, with a light step, to her small repository of bandages and thread, she was back in a moment; and,

spreading a small quantity of a very healing ointment, which her mother had previously prepared, upon a piece of linen cloth, she applied it to the part where the skin was beginning to peel off, with the dexterity of an experienced surgeon, and, having fastened it with a bandage drawn sufficiently tight, she was at her work again before Duncan could move his lips to thank her. He was now offered a pair of gloves, and with them, and the soothing nature of the ointment, his labour was less painful than he had anticipated, till their operations were interrupted by the rain.

Frosty mornings and rainy days, with short intervals of fair weather, succeeded each other. When in the field, Duncan had always an opportunity of seeing Catherine; but, though he really did endeavour to ingratiate himself in her favour, she still dexterously contrived to eschew all his attentions. He was not in love with her; but he felt attached to her by the same sort of feeling with which one regards a beautiful picture, or any other object which delights the senses. The symmetry of her form, the brilliancy of her complexion, and the lustre of her eyes, excited his admiration; and, in the absence of other objects, drew his attention. In this state of mind, he frequently puzzled his brains to account for the strangeness of her manners; and, one evening, shortly after his arrival, he resolved to introduce himself to her mother; if, peradventure, his so doing might throw some light upon the subject. With this intention, he had passed the little window, and was approaching the door, when he heard a chair overturned and a noise within, as if some one had fled to the farther end of the house in great confusion. This induced him to listen for a moment; and, while thus listening, he heard Elspeth exclaim—

"What i' the warld's come owre the lassie noo!—whaur hae ye run till, Kate? Na, I never saw the like o' that!

The sark ye was mendin at, lyin i' the aise-hole, an' a red cinder aboon't!—if I hadna grippit it, it might hae been a' in a lowe lang afore ye cam to look for't; an' Andrew would only gotten a pouchfu o' aise to tak hame wi' him on Saturday nicht, instead of a sark." Duncan was no eavesdropper; but his curiosity was strongly excited by what he had heard, and he could neither go in nor drag himself with sufficient speed from the door.

As Elspeth was concluding her ejaculations, the frightened damsel returned, and was heard to say, in a suppressed tone—"O mither, dinna be angry—I thought I saw Duncan Cowpet come past the window, an' I ran to be out o' his gait. I canna bide him; his een's never off me the hail day, an' mony a time I dinna ken whar to look."

"Hoot, lassie," rejoined her mother; "ye aye mak bogles o' windlestraes. Duncan is an honest lad, I'll warrant him, an' willin to work, too, though he's no very guid o't. But, for a' that, dinna think that I want ye to draw up wi' him; for I wouldna hae ye to gie ony encouragement to anither man on earth, as lang as Andrew Sharp pays mair respect to you than the lave. But only tak my advice—neither rin awa when ye see Duncan coming, nor seem to notice his attentions when he comes, and he'll soon bestow them on some ither body."

"I'll rather cut my finger for an excuse to bide at hame, though, afore I gang to the field when he's there," was Catherine's half-pettish reply.

"Confound ye if ye do ony sic thing!" cried her mother: "though Sandy pays the house-rent, noo, recollect the guidman can ill spare ony o' his shearers when the weather is fair."

Duncan stood to hear no more; if he had formerly admired Catherine for her beauty, he now respected her for the principles upon which she acted, and he wished for an opportunity to convince her that he too could act a disinter-

ested part. On the following day, his conduct was such as to free her mind from most of those disagreeable feelings which hitherto she had entertained; and, when he repeated his visit in the evening, though she again saw him pass the window, she did not run away. After he was seated, he spoke of Andrew Sharp, and gratefully adverted to his kindness in conducting him to Sunnybraes on an evening when few would have cared for venturing abroad. Catherine's fears were now gone; she felt as if she could have died to serve the man who spoke favourably of her lover; and the conversation was kept up with the greatest cordiality upon all sides. Local affairs came to be discussed; and, as Duncan seemed curious to gain information concerning the farms, and the character of the farmers in the neighbourhood, Elspeth, in her endeavours to satisfy his curiosity, told him all she knew of Mr. Black and Mr. Goosequill, with their supposed schemes for the ejectment of William Chrighton.

It was now the latter end of October, and still the harvest was far from being completed. The watch-dog had died, and the horses began to exhibit symptoms of lameness, which were the more distressing, that the securing of the crop depended entirely upon their ability to labour. Two of the cattle were brought home, by the boy who herded them, in a diseased state, and the same evening one of them died. On the following morning, one of the horses was found unable to rise; and, before noon, he was dead also. It seemed as if the fates had conspired to ruin the old farmer and his family; day after day, horses, cattle, and other live stock, sickened and died; and, in a short time, he found himself without the means of prosecuting the labours of so precarious a season, with any prospect of success. To add to his distress, a summons was now served against him for fifty pounds, "which," as that document affirmed, "he still owed, and had refused to pay to the

creditors of Mr. Rickledyke, for the building of his barn, &c." Mr. Rickledyke was the contractor who had been employed on this occasion; the whole of the money had not been paid when he became bankrupt; and, though the old farmer was perfectly certain that he had paid it, when he recollected that the bankrupt was a friend of Mr. Goosequill's, and that the money had been paid in his office, he felt convinced that the whole was a trick, intended to embarrass if not to ruin him. He recollected farther, that, as a *stamp* could not, at the time, be obtained, for giving him a discharge, he had left the place without any voucher for the payment of the debt, beyond the testimony of two witnesses who were now dead; and thus he had no alternative but to pay it again.

The appearance of the law officers, at Sunnybraes, gave rise to a report, which was industriously spread, that William Chrighton was either a bankrupt or about to become one; and every individual who had the slightest claim upon him, came hurrying in with distraints and summonses; and, to complete the catastrophe, on Saturday, about noon, Mr. Goosequill made his appearance, with the proper assistants, and placed the whole of the crop, stocking, &c., on the farm of Sunnybraes, under sequestration for the rent.

All hope of continuing in the farm was now at an end, and it only remained to make the most of the wreck which was still left. On Sabbath morning, the sky had cleared; the wind shifted about to the north, and, on the afternoon of the same day, a strong frost set in. The frost, accompanied by a sharp breeze, continued throughout the evening, and, as soon as midnight was past, the old man and his son prepared to embrace so favourable an opportunity for securing a portion of the victual which was still exposed. While they were engaged in these preparations, Duncan was left to the care of Mrs. Chrighton, who had been in-

structed to furnish him with some *warm meat*, and a great-coat. After these injunctions had been obeyed, as he sat by the fire, while she stood over him with anxiety and distress depicted in her countenance—"O Duncan," said she, "it's a terrible thing for honest folk to be sae sair harassed. If lairds would only look after their affairs themselves, instead of trusting them to factors, I'm sure it would be better for a' parties. But it's a' owre with us, and there's naething noo but to tak some cothouse, and the guidman maun e'en work in a ditch, and I maun spin for the morsel that supports our lives. George, too, is so disgusted with the usage we have received, that he speaks of going off to America. And Nancy Black—poor lassie! my heart is aye sair when I think about her—they've had a likin for ane anither since they were bairns at the school, and, if things had gane richt, they might been happy, and we might been comfortable; but that, like the rest of our prospects, is at an end." Mrs. Chrighton's disjointed observations—particularly what related to Nancy Black, were a mystery to Duncan; and, though he wished to have an explanation, as the cart was now ready and he was called, he was obliged to console himself with the expectation that time might enable him to discover their meaning.

When they reached the field, the moon was shining clear, the wind was blowing a stiff gale from the north, and the sheaves of corn, where any moisture had attached to them, were frozen as hard as iron. There was only one of the working horses now serviceable: to supply the place of another, a colt had been that morning pressed into the service; but, owing to the awkwardness of this animal, the cart was overturned and broken in such a manner as to render the assistance of the smith necessary before it could be again used. Duncan Cowpet, who, notwithstanding his unlucky name, had escaped unhurt, volunteered his services for this expedition, and went off, with the cart and one of

the horses, to the smithy. When he reached Nettlebank, on his return from the smithy, he had nearly driven his cart over Nancy Black, who, whitened by the falling snow, was leaning against the garden wall, and appeared to have been shedding tears. On discovering him, she endeavoured to assume an air of cheerfulness, and asked if he would stop for a short time, as she would have a message for him. Being answered in the affirmative, she hurried into the house, and in a few minutes returned with a piece of folded paper, which she requested him to give to his master's son. "But stay," said she, as he was putting it into his pocket —"it is not closed—I had forgot;" and then, after a short pause, she added—"but perhaps you do not read *write?*"

"Na," said Duncan, speaking in an accent much broader than the provincial dialect—"na, my faither was owre puir for giein me ony buke lear." This seemed to satisfy the damsel, and she intrusted him with the letter in its unclosed state, only enjoining him to show it to nobody, and give it into the hands of George Chrighton.

After nightfall, George said that "he must go to the smithy for some things which had been forgotten in the forenoon," and wished to see Duncan, to give him some orders about foddering the remaining horses. But Duncan was nowhere to be found; and, after performing the task himself—the evening being now well advanced—he took the road for the smithy. It seemed, however, that he had business elsewhere; for, on reaching Nettlebank, he climbed over the garden wall, and, tapping gently at a low window, he was answered by a sigh from within. The door was immediately opened without noise, and a female form stood by his side. He placed her arm in his, and they passed silently to the barn, where they both stood without speaking for some time, and both sighed deeply. At last—

"George," said Nancy Black—for it was she—"I have

done wrong in requesting you to meet me to-night; but I have been so much agitated with what I have heard of late that I could not do otherwise."

"What have you heard, my love?" inquired the other, in a tone of the deepest tenderness—"only tell me, and, whatever your feelings may be, there is at least one heart ready to share them."

"I thought I could tell you all," said Nancy, "before you were here; but now, when you are beside me, I cannot, and yet I must; for, though my father and brother are from home, they may soon be back, and I may be missed from the house. Did you ever hear," she continued, evidently placing her feelings under a strong restraint as she spoke—"did you ever hear that your dog was poisoned?"

"I was never told so," said George; "but, perhaps, I have suspected that the dog, and the horses and the cattle likewise, were poisoned; and, perhaps, I have suspected who did it. But, if that were the worst, we might get over it still; and you must not distress yourself, my love, for dogs and horses."

"But I have other causes of distress," said she, still keeping her feelings under the same control. "We had Mr. Goosequill here last night and this forenoon; and, from parts of the conversation which passed when they were more than half drunk, I learned that Gilbert and Miss Goosequill are to be married, and Sunnybraes is to be their residence, which the factor says he is certain he can now get at my father's offer. Oh, how my heart burns to think a daughter must thus reveal a parent's disgrace!"

"Nay, my dearest, do not distress yourself for this," rejoined the other. "Though my father cannot resign Sunnybraes to you and me, as he had intended, to mourn over it will not mend the matter. Let Gilbert and Grizzy enjoy the farm; but, before they can establish themselves

on it, I will be on my passage to America; and, in a few years, with the blessing of God, I may be able to return —a better man than the farmer of Sunnybraes; and then, Nancy—but, first, promise that you will love me till"—

Here he was interrupted by the sobs of her whom he addressed. It was long before she could speak; and, when she could speak, long and earnestly did she try to dissuade him from his purpose. But the youth, perceiving no prospect of their union, except by the plan which he proposed to adopt, was inflexible. Finding all her entreaties were vain—

"Then it is as my heart foreboded," said she. "To-day I heard from Andrew Sharp of your intention of going to America. I walked out to conceal my feelings; and, while leaning on the garden wall, forgetful of everything else, your servant passed, and then the wish rose in my heart to see you once more. After I had made my foolish request, I had still another wish ungratified, and that was, in case my arguments should fail, as they have done, that you would carry along with you some remembrance of her whom you once professed to love. This is woman's weakness, but perhaps you will pardon it; and perhaps you will keep the gift, though no better than a child's bauble, for the sake of the giver."

"I will—I will!" interrupted George, eagerly, whilst he took her hand.

"I am half ashamed of it," she continued; "it is only a small sampler, on which, shortly after leaving school, I sewed your father and mother's names at full length, and yours, and—and mine—I may tell you this now, when we are about to part, perhaps for ever. No one ever saw me put a stitch in it. Will you keep it for my sake?"

"While life remains," said the lover; "run, my love, and bring it, that I may place it in my bosom."

"It is here already," said she, "and that is the reason why I wished our meeting to be in this place. Fearing lest my father should come home, and prevent me getting it from the house, I brought it out and concealed it here."

With these words, she made a few steps aside; and, as she stooped down to bring her little keepsake from under the empty sacks which covered it, instead of returning with it, she started and screamed. George flew to her assistance. Something seemed stirring among the sacks, as if an animal had been attempting to rise; he laid hold of it, and dragged a heavy body after him to the door. The moon, which was now up, showed his burden to be a man; and, grasping him by the collar—"Scoundrel!" he said, "what business had you there?" then, turning him round to have a better view of his face—"Duncan!" he added—his anger in some measure yielding to surprise—"I had nearly given you a thrashing; but you have been our guest, and assisted us in our difficulties, and I must hear from your own lips that you are guilty, before I pass sentence upon you." With these words he quitted his grasp.

The blood flushed Duncan's cheek, and for some seconds he seemed uncertain whether to offer resistance or sue for peace. At last he said—holding out his hand, which the other as frankly took—"If you had *thrashed* me, it would have been no more than I deserved. But perhaps you shall have no reason afterwards to repent of having spared yourself this labour; for, though I had my own reasons for doing as I have done"—

These words were spoken in good English, with an accent and a dignity altogether different from the speaker's former mode of speaking; but, before he could proceed, he was saluted, by a rough voice from behind, with the words—"I shall *thrash you*, you skulking vagabond!" And,

at the same moment, he was grasped roughly by the collar by Mr. Black, who raised a heavy oaken cudgel to strike him on the head. Had that blow descended, the probability is that Duncan Cowpet would have slept with his fathers; but George Chrighton wrenched the stick from the hand of the infuriated man.

"Unchain the dog!" bawled Mr. Black, in a voice of thunder.

"I'll s-et loose Cae-sar," hickuped his son. But, instead of doing as he said, he lay down beside the animal, and began, in good earnest, to that operation which the "dog" must perform before he can "turn to his vomit."

Mr. Black still continued to keep a hold of Duncan with one hand, and to strike him with the other, till George, stepping behind him, threw him quietly down upon a quantity of straw; and he, too, began to discharge the contents of his over-loaded stomach. Nancy, who, up to this moment had stood in speechless terror, now stepped from the barn.

"Fly, fly," she whispered. "My father is drunk. I know it. He has never seen me; and you may escape. I will find some means of sending it. Fly, I conjure you!" And she pushed him gently from her.

On the following morning, Duncan was amissing; and, like a fool, he had run off and left his five guineas behind him. But the mystery was about to be cleared up. A little after daybreak, letters were delivered to the whole of the parties concerned, summoning them to meet the *laird* at an inn in the neighbourhood; and the surprise of all may be easily imagined when they discovered that Sir Patrick Felspar was no other than Duncan Cowpet in a different dress. The result was such as might have been expected from a laird who had learned the truth from observation and experience. We have only room to add, that shortly thereafter two marriages were celebrated—

two individuals who had been accustomed to hold their heads high were effectually humbled; and, to this day, whenever any farmer, or other individual, is supposed to be dealing unfairly with his neighbours, it is a common saying in the district—"Send Duncan Cowpet, to see what he is about."

THE RIVAL NIGHTCAPS.

One little sentence gave rise to all the disputes of the old philosophers, from Parmenides down to Aristotle, and that was composed of three words, *ex nihilo nihil*—nothing can come out of nothing—upon which were raised the doctrines of the atomists, incorporealists, epicureans, theists, and atheists, and all the other races of dreamers that have disturbed the common sense, lethargy, or comfort of the world for thousands of years; so that nothing could have better proved the absolute nothingness of their favourite maxim, that nothing could come from nothing, than the effects of that very dogma itself, for nothing ever made such a stir in the moral world, since it deserved to be called something. But a more extraordinary circumstance is, that, though we every day see the most gigantic consequences result from what may be termed, paradoxically, *less than nothing*, there are certain metaphysical wiseacres who still stick to the old maxim, in spite of their own senses, even that of feeling, and declare it to be true gospel. Let them read the tale of real every-day life we are now to lay before them, and then say, if they dare, that it is impossible that anything can come out of inanity. But, to proceed:—

In the neighbourhood of the suburban village of Bridgeton, near Glasgow, there lived, a good many years ago, a worthy man, and an excellent weaver, of the name of Thomas Callender, and his wife, a bustling, active woman, but, if anything, a little of what is called the randy. We have said that Thomas's occupation was the loom. It was so; but, be it known, that he was not a mere journeyman weaver—one who is obliged to toil for the subsistence of

the day that is passing over him, and whose sole dependence is on the labour of his hands. By no means. Thomas had been all his days a careful, thrifty man, and had made his hay while the sun shone;—when wages were good, he had saved money—as much as could keep him in a small way, independent of labour, should sickness, or any other casualty, render it necessary for him to fall back on his secret resources. Being, at the time we speak of, however, suffering under no bodily affliction of any kind, but, on the contrary, being hale and hearty, and not much past the meridian of life, he continued at his loom, although, perhaps, not altogether with the perseverance and assiduity which had distinguished the earlier part of his brilliant career. The consciousness of independence, and, probably, some slight preliminary touches from approaching eild, had rather abated the energy of his exertions; yet Thomas still made a fair week's wage of it, as matters went. Now, with a portion of the honest wealth which he had acquired, Mr. Callender had built himself a good substantial tenement —the first floor of which was occupied by looms, which were let on hire; the second was his own place of residence; and the third was divided into small domiciles, and let to various tenants. To the house was attached a small garden, a kail-yard, in which he was wont, occasionally, to recreate himself with certain botanical and horticultural pursuits, the latter being specially directed to the cultivation of greens, cabbages, leeks, and other savoury and useful pot herbs. Of his house and garden altogether, Mr. Callender was, and reasonably enough, not a little proud; for it was, certainly, a snug little property; and, moreover, it was entirely the creation of his own industry.

But Thomas's mansion stood not alone in its glory. A rival stood near. This was the dwelling of Mr. John Anderson, in almost every respect the perfect counterpart

of that of Mr. Thomas Callender—a similarity which is in part accounted for by the facts, that John was also a weaver, that he too had made a little money by a life of industry and economy, and that the house was built by himself. By what we have just said, then, we have shown, we presume, that Thomas and John were near neighbours; and, having done so, it follows, of course, that their wives were near neighbours also; but we beg to remark, regarding the latter, that it by no means follows that they were friends, or that they had any liking for each other. The fact, indeed, was quite otherwise. They hated each other with great cordiality—a hatred in which a feeling of jealousy of each other's manifestations of wealth, whether in matters relating to their respective houses or persons, or those of their husbands, was the principal feature. Any new article of dress which the one was seen to display, was sure to be immediately repeated, or, if possible, surpassed by the other; and the same spirit of retaliation was carried throughout every department of their domestic economy.

Between the husbands, too, there was no great goodwill; for, besides being influenced, to a certain extent, in their feelings towards each other by their wives, they had had a serious difference on their own account. John Anderson, on evil purpose intent, had once stoned some ducks of Thomas Callender's out of a dub, situated in the rear of, and midway between the two houses; claiming said dub for the especial use of *his* ducks alone; and, on that occasion, had maimed and otherwise severely injured a very fine drake, the property of his neighbour, Thomas Callender. Now, Thomas very naturally resented this unneighbourly proceeding on the part of John; and, further, insisted that his ducks had as good a right to the dub as Anderson's. Anderson denied the justice of this claim; Callender maintained it; and the consequence was

a series of law proceedings, which mulcted each of them of somewhere about fifty pounds sterling money, and finally ended in the decision, that they should divide the dub between them in equal portions, which was accordingly done.

The good-will, then, towards each other, between the husbands, was thus not much greater than between their wives; but, in their case, of course, it was not marked by any of those outbreaks and overt acts which distinguished the enmity of their better halves. The dislike of the former was passive, that of the latter active—most indefatigably active; for Mrs. Anderson was every bit as spirited a woman as her neighbour, Mrs. Callender, and was a dead match for her in any way she might try.

Thus stood matters between these two rival houses of York and Lancaster, when Mrs. Callender, on looking from one of her windows one day, observed that the head of her rival's husband, who was at the moment recreating himself in his garden, was comfortably set off with a splendid new striped Kilmarnock nightcap. Now, when Mrs. Callender saw this, and recollected the very shabby, faded article of the same denomination—"mair like a dish-cloot," as she muttered to herself, "than onything else"—which her Thomas wore, she determined on instantly providing him with a new one; resolved, as she also remarked to herself, not to let the Anderson's beat her, even in the matter of a nightcap. But Mrs. Callender not only resolved on rivalling her neighbour, in the matter of having a new nightcap for her husband, but in surpassing her in the quality of the said nightcap. She determined that her "man's" should be a red one; "a far mair genteeler thing," as she said to herself, "than John Anderson's vulgar striped Kilmarnock." Having settled this matter to her own satisfaction, and having dexterously prepared her husband for the vision of a new nightcap—which she

did by urging sundry reasons, totally different from those under whose influence she really acted, as she knew that he would never give into such an absurdity as a rivalship with his neighbour in the matter of a nightcap—this matter settled then, we say, the following day saw Mrs. Callender sailing into Glasgow, to purchase a red nightcap for her husband—a mission which, we need not say, she very easily accomplished. Her choice was one of the brightest hue she could find—a flaming article, that absolutely dazzled Thomas with the intensity of its glare, when it was triumphantly unrolled before him.

"Jenny," said the latter, in perfect simplicity of heart, and utter ignorance of the true cause of his wife's care of his comfort in the present instance—"Jenny, but that *is* a bonny thing," he said, looking admiringly at the gaudy commodity, into which he had now thrust his hand and part of his arm, in order to give it all possible extension, and thus holding it up before him as he spoke.

"Really it *is* a bonny thing," he repeated, "and, I warrant, a comfortable."

"Isna't?" replied his wife, triumphantly. And she would have added, "How far prettier and mair genteeler a thing than John Anderson's!" But, as this would have betrayed secrets, she refrained, and merely added, "Now, my man, Tammas, ye'll just wear't when ye gang about the doors and the yard. It'll mak ye look decent and respectable—what ye wasna in that creeshy cloot ye're wearin, that made ye look mair like a tauty bogle than a Christian man."

Thomas merely smiled at these remarks, and made no reply in words.

Thus far, then, Mrs. Callender's plot had gone on swimmingly. There only wanted now her husband's appearance in the garden in his new red nightcap; where the latter could not but be seen by her rival, to complete her

triumph—and this satisfaction she was not long denied. Thomas, at her suggestion, warily and cautiously urged however, instantly took the field in his new nightcap; and the result was as complete and decisive as the heart of a woman, in Mrs. Callender's circumstances, could desire. Mrs. Anderson saw the nightcap, guessed the cause of its appearance, and resolved to be avenged. In that moment, when her sight was blasted, her pride humbled, and her spirits roused, which they were all at one and the same time by the vision of Thomas Callender's new red nightcap, she resolved on getting her husband to strike the striped cap, and mount one of precisely the same description—better if possible, but she was not sure if this could be had.

Now, on prevailing on *her* husband to submit to the acquisition of another new nightcap, Mrs. Anderson had a much more difficult task to perform than her rival; for the cap that John was already provided with, unlike Thomas's, was not a week out of the shop, and no earthly good reason, one would think, could therefore be urged, why he should so soon get another. But what will not woman's wit accomplish? Anything! As proof of this, if proof were wanted, we need only mention that Mrs. Anderson *did* succeed in this delicate and difficult negotiation, and prevailed upon John, first, to allow her to go into Glasgow to buy him a new red nightcap, and to promise to wear it when it should be bought. How she accomplished this—what sort of reasoning she employed—we know not; but certain it is that it was done. Thus fully warranted, eagerly and cleverly did Mrs. Anderson, on the instant, prepare to execute the mission to which this warrant referred. In ten minutes she was dressed, and, in one more was on her way to Glasgow to make the desiderated purchase. Experiencing, of course, as little difficulty in effecting this matter as her rival had done, Mrs.

Anderson soon found herself in possession of a red nightcap, as bright, every bit, as Mr. Callender's; and this cap she had the happiness of drawing on the head of her unconscious husband, who, we need scarcely add, knew as little of the real cause of his being fitted out with this new piece of head-gear as his neighbour, Callender.

Thus far, then, with Mrs. Anderson too, went the plot of the nightcaps smoothly; and all that she also now wanted to attain the end she aimed at, was her husband's appearance in *his* garden, with his new acquisition on.

This consummation she also quickly brought round. John sallied out with his red nightcap; and, oh, joy of joys! Mrs. Callender saw it. Ay, Mrs. Callender saw it —at once recognised in it the spirit which had dictated its display; and deep and deadly was the revenge that she vowed.

"Becky, Becky," she exclaimed, in a tone of lofty indignation—and thus summoning to her presence, from an adjoining apartment, her daughter, a little girl of about ten years of age—"rin owre dereckly to Lucky Anderson's and tell her to gie me my jeely can immediately." And Mrs. Callender stamped her foot, grew red in the face, and exhibited sundry other symptoms of towering passion. Becky instantly obeyed the order so peremptorily given; and, while she is doing so, we may throw in a digressive word or two, by the way of more fully enlightening the reader regarding the turn which matters seemed now about to take. Be it known to him, then, that the demand for the jelly pot, which was now about to be made on Mrs. Anderson, was not a *bona fide* proceeding. It was not made in good faith; for Mrs. Callender knew well, and had been told so fifty times, that the said jelly pot was no longer in existence as a jelly pot; and moreover, she had been, as often as she was told this, offered full compensation, which might be about three farthings

sterling money of this realm, for the demolished commodity. Moreover, again, it was three years since it had been borrowed. From all this, the reader will at once perceive, what was the fact, that the sending for the said jelly pot, on the present occasion, and in the way described, was a mere breaking of ground previous to the performance of some other contemplated operations. It was, in truth, entirely a tactical proceeding—a dexterously and ingeniously laid pretext for a certain intended measure which could not decently have stood on its own simple merits. In proof of this, we need only state, that it is beyond all question that nothing could have disappointed Mrs. Callender more than the return of the desiderated jelly pot. But this, she knew, she had not to fear, and the result showed that she was right. The girl shortly came back with the usual reply—that the pot was broken; but that Mrs. Anderson would cheerfully pay the value of it, if Mrs. Callender would say what that was. To the inexpressible satisfaction of the latter, however, the message, on this occasion, was accompanied by some impertinences which no woman of spirit could tamely submit to. She was told, for instance, that "she made mair noise aboot her paltry, dirty jelly mug, a thousand times, than it was a' worth," and was ironically, and, we may add, insultingly entreated, "for ony sake to mak nae mair wark aboot it, and a dizzen wad be sent her for't."

"My troth, and there's a stock o' impidence for ye!" said Mrs. Callender, on her little daughter having delivered herself of all the small provocatives with which she had been charged. "There's impidence for ye!" she said, planting her hands in her sides, and looking the very personification of injured innocence. "Was the like o't ever heard? First to borrow, and then to break my jeely mug, and noo to tell me, whan I'm seekin my ain, that I'm makin mair noise aboot it than it's a' worth! My certy,

but she *has* a brazen face. The auld wizzened, upsettin limmer that she is. Set *them* up, indeed wi' red nicht-caps." Now, this was the last member of Mrs. Callender's philippic, but it was by no means the least. In fact, it was the whole gist of the matter—the sum and substance, and, we need not add, the real and true cause of her present amiable feeling towards her worthy neighbours, John Anderson and his wife. Adjusting her *mutch* now on her head, and spreading her apron decorously before her, Mrs. Callender intimated her intention of proceeding instantly to Mrs. Anderson's to demand her jelly pot in person, and to seek, at the same time, satisfaction for the insulting message that had been sent her. Acting on this resolution, she forthwith commenced her march towards the domicile of John Anderson, nursing, the while, her wrath to keep it warm. On reaching the door, she announced her presence by a series of sharp, open-the-door-instantly knocks, which were promptly attended to, and the visitor courteously admitted.

"Mrs. Anderson," said Mrs. Callender, on entering, and assuming a calmness and composure of demeanour that was sadly belied by the suppressed agitation, or rather fury, which she could not conceal, "I'm just come to ask ye if ye'll be sae guid, *Mem*, as gie me my jeely mug."

"Yer jeely mug, Mrs. Callender!" exclaimed Mrs. Anderson, raising herself to her utmost height, and already beginning to exhibit symptoms of incipient indignation. "Yer jeely mug, Mrs. Callender!" she repeated, with a provokingly ironical emphasis. "Dear help me, woman, but ye *do* mak an awfu wark about that jeely mug o' yours. I'm sure it wasna sae muckle worth; and ye hae been often tell't that it was broken, but that we wad willingly pay ye for't."

"It's no payment I want, Mrs. Anderson," replied Mrs. Callender, with a high-spirited toss of the head. "I want

my mug, and my mug I'll hae. Do ye hear that?" And here Mrs. Callender struck her clenched fist on the open side of her left hand, in the impressive way peculiar to some ladies when under the influence of passion. "And, since ye come to that o't, let me tell ye ye're a very insultin, ill-bred woman, to tell me that it wasna muckle worth, after ye hae broken't."

"My word, lass," replied Mrs. Anderson, bridling up, with flushed countenance, and head erect, to the calumniator, "but ye're no blate to ca' me thae names i' my ain house."

"Ay, I'll ca' ye thae names, and waur too, in yer ain house, or onywhar else," replied the other belligerent, clenching her teeth fiercely together, and thrusting her face with most intense ferocity into the countenance of her antagonist. "Ay, here or onywhar else," she replied, "I'll ca' ye a mean-spirited, impident woman—an upsettin impident woman! Set your man up, indeed, wi' a red nichtkep!"

"An' what for no?" replied Mrs. Anderson with a look of triumphant inquiry. "He's as weel able to pay for't as you, and maybe, if a' was kent, a hantle better. A red nichtkep, indeed, ye impertinent hizzy!"

"'Od, an' ye hizzy me, I'll te-e-e-eer the liver out o' ye!" exclaimed the now infuriated Mrs. Callender, at the same instant seizing her antagonist by the hair of the head and *mutch* together, and, in a twinkling, tearing the latter into a thousand shreds. Active hostilities being now fairly commenced, a series of brilliant operations, both offensive and defensive, immediately ensued. The first act of aggression on the part of Mrs. Callender—namely, demolishing her opponent's head-gear—was returned by the latter by a precisely similar proceeding; that is, by tearing *her* mutch into fragments.

This preliminary operation performed, the combatants

resorted to certain various other demonstrative acts of love and friendship; but now with such accompaniments of screams and exclamations as quickly filled the apartment which was the scene of strife, with neighbours, who instantly began to attempt to effect a separation of the combatants. While they were thus employed, in came John Anderson, who had been out of the way when the tug of war began, and close upon his heels came Mr. Callender, whose ears an alarming report of the contest in which his gallant spouse was engaged, had reached. Both gentlemen were, at the moment, in their red nightcaps, and might thus be considerd as the standard bearers of the combatants.

"Whats' a' this o't?" exclaimed Mr. Anderson, pushing into the centre of the crowd by which the two women were surrounded.

"O, the hizzy!" exclaimed his wife, who had, at the instant, about a yard of her antagonist's hair rolled about her hand. "It's a' aboot your nichtkep, John, and her curst jeely mug. A' aboot your nichtkep, and the jeely mug."

Now, this allusion to the jelly pot, John perfectly understood, but that to the nightcap he did not, nor did he attend to it; but, as became a dutiful and loving husband to do in such circmstances, immediately took the part of his wife, and was in the act of thrusting her antagonist aside, which operation he was performing somewhat rudely, when he was collared from behind by his neighbour, Thomas Callender, who naturally enough enrolled himself at once on the side of his better half.

"Hauns aff, John!" exclaimed Mr. Callender—their old grudge fanning the flame of that hostility which was at this moment rapidly increasing in the bosoms of both the gentlemen, as he gave Mr. Anderson sundry energetic tugs and twists, with a view of putting him *hors de combat.* "Hauns aff, neebor!" he said. "Hauns aff, if ye please,

till we ken wha has the richt o' this bisness, and what it's a' about."

"Pu' doon their pride, Tam!—pu' doon their pride!" exclaimed Mrs. Callender, who, although intently engaged at the moment in tearing out a handful of her opponent's hair, was yet aware of the reinforcement that had come to her aid. "Pu' doon their pride, Tam. Tack a claut o' John's nichtkep. The limmer says they're better able to afford ane than we are."

While Mrs. Callender was thus expressing the particular sentiments which occupied her mind at the moment, John Anderson had turned round to resent the liberty which the former had taken of collaring him; and this resentment he expressed by collaring his assailant in turn. The consequence of this proceeding was a violent struggle, which finally ended in a close stand-up fight between the male combatants, who shewed great spirit, although, perhaps, not a great deal of science. John Anderson, in particular, struck out manfully, and, in a twinkling, tapped the claret of his antagonist, Tom Callender. Tom, in return, made some fair attempts at closing up the day-lights of John Anderson, but, truth compels us to say, without success. The fight now became general—the wives having quitted their holds of each other, and flown to the rescue of their respective husbands. They were thus all bundled together in one indiscriminate and unintelligible melée. One leading object or purpose, however, was discernible on the part of the female combatants. This was to get hold of the red nightcaps—each that of her husband's antagonist; and, after a good deal of scrambling, and clutching, and punching, they both succeeded in tearing off the obnoxious head-dress, with each a handful of the unfortunate wearer's hair along with it. While this was going on, the conflicting, but firmly united mass of combatants, who were all bundled, or rather locked together in close and

deadly strife, was rolling heavily, sometimes one way, and sometimes another, sometimes ending with a thud against a partition, that made the whole house shake, sometimes with a ponderous lodgment against a door, which, unable to resist the shock, flew open, and landed the belligerents at their full length on the floor, where they rolled over one another in a very edifying and picturesque manner.

But this could not continue very long, and neither did it. A consummation or catastrophe occurred, which suddenly, and at once, put an end to the affray. In one of those heavy lee-lurches which the closely united combatants made, they came thundering against the frail legs of a dresser, which was ingeniously contrived to support two or three tiers of shelves, which, again, were laden with stoneware, the pride of Mrs. Anderson's heart, built up with nice and dexterous contrivance, so as to shew to the greatest advantage. Need we say what was the consequence of this rude assault on the legs of the aforementioned dresser, supporting, as it did, this huge superstructure of shelves and crockery? Scarcely. But we will. Down, then, came the dresser; and down, as a necessary corollary, came also the shelves, depositing their contents with an astounding crash upon the floor, not a jug out of some eight or ten, of various shapes and sizes, not a plate out of some scores, not a bowl out of a dozen, not a cup or saucer out of an entire set, escaping total demolition. The destruction was frightful —unprecedented in the annals of domestic mishaps. On the combatants the effect of the thundering crash of the crockery, or smashables, as they have been sometimes characteristically designated, was somewhat like that which has been known to be produced in a sea-fight by the blowing up of a ship. Hostilities were instantly suspended; all looking with silent horror on the dreadful scene of ruin around them. Nor did any disposition to renew the con-

test return. On the contrary, there was an evident inclination, on the part of two of the combatants—namely, Mr. Callender and his wife—to evacuate the premises. Appalled at the extent of the mischief done, and visited with an awkward feeling of probable responsibility, they gradually edged towards the door, and, finally, sneaked out of the house without saying a word.

"If there's law or justice in the land," exclaimed Mrs. Anderson, in high excitation, as she swept together the fragments of her demolished crockery, "I'll hae't on Tam Callender and his wife. May I niver see the morn, if I haena them afore the Shirra before a week gangs owre my head! I hae a set aff, noo, against her jeely mug, I think."

"It's been a bonny business," replied her husband; "but what on earth was't a' aboot?"

"What was't a' aboot!" repeated his wife, with some asperity of manner, but now possessed of presence of mind enough to shift the ground of quarrel, which she felt would comprise her with her husband. "Didna I tell ye that already? What should it be a' aboot, but her confounded jeely mug! But I'll mak her pay for this day's wark, or I'm sair cheated. It'll be as bad a job this for them as the duck-dub, I'm thinkin."

"We hadna muckle to brag o' there oursels, guidwife," interposed her husband, calmly.

"See, there," said Mrs. Anderson, either not heeding, or not hearing John's remark. "See, there," she said, holding up a fragment of one of the broken vessels, "there's the end o' my bonny cheeny jug, that I was sae vogie o', and that hadna its neebor in braid Scotland." And a tear glistened in the eye of the susceptible mourner, as she contemplated the melancholy remains, and recalled to memory the departed splendours of the ill-fated tankard. Quietly dashing, however, the tear of sorrow aside, both her person and spirit assumed the lofty attitude of deter-

mined vengeance; and, "*she'll* rue this," she now went on, "if there be ony law or justice in the kingdom. It'll be a dear jug to *her*, or my name's no what it is."

Equally indignant with his wife at the assault and battery committed by the Callenders, but less talkative, John sat quietly ruminating on the events of the evening, and, anon, still continuing to raise his hand, at intervals, to his mangled countenance. With the same taciturnity, he subsequently assisted Mrs. Anderson to throw the collected fragments of the broken dishes into a hamper, and to carry and deposit said hamper in an adjoining closet, where, it was determined, they should be carefully kept as evidence of the extent of the damage which had been sustained.

In the meantime, neither Mrs. Thomas Callender nor Mr. Thomas Callender felt by any means at ease respecting the crockery catastrophe. Although feeling that it was a mere casualty of war, and an unforeseen and unpremeditated result of a fair and equal contest, they yet could not help entertaining some vague apprehension for the consequences. They felt, in short, that it might be made a question whether they were not liable for the damage done, seeing that they had intruded themselves into their neighbour's house, where they had no right to go. It was under some such awkward fear as this that Mr. Callender, who had also obtained an evasive account of the cause of quarrel, said, with an unusually long and grave face, to his wife, on their gaining their own house, and holding, at the same time, a handkerchief to his still bleeding and now greatly swollen proboscis—

"Yon was a deevil o' a stramash, Mirran. I never heard the like o't. It was awfu'. I think I hear the noise o' the crashing plates and bowls in my lugs yet."

"Deil may care! Let them tak it!" replied Mrs. Callender, endeavouring to assume a disregard of consequences, which she was evidently very far from feeling. "She was

aye owre vain o' her crockery; so that better couldna happen her."

"Ay," replied her husband; "but yon smashing o't was rather a serious business."

"It was just music to my lugs, then," said Mrs. Callender, boldly.

"Maybe," rejoined her husband, "but I doot we'll hae to pay the piper. They'll try't ony way, I'm jalousin."

"Let them. There'll be nae law or justice in the country if they mak that oot," responded Mrs. Callender, and exhibiting, in this sentiment, the very striking difference of opinion between the two ladies, of the law and justice of the land.

The fears, however, which Mr. Callender openly expressed, as above recorded, and which his wife felt but concealed, were not groundless. On the evening of the very next day after the battle of the nightcaps, as Thomas Callender was sitting in his elbow-chair by the fire, luxuriously enjoying its grateful warmth, and the ease and comfort of his slippers and red nightcap, which he had drawn well down over his ears, he was suddenly startled by a sharp, loud rap at the door. Mrs. Callender hastened to open it, when two papers were thrust into her hands by an equivocal-looking personage, who, without saying a word, wheeled round on his heel the instant he had placed the mysterious documents in her possession, and hastened away.

With some misgivings as to the contents of these papers, Mrs. Callender placed them before her husband.

"What's this?" said the latter, with a look of great alarm, and placing his spectacles on his nose, preparatory to a deliberate perusal of the suspicious documents. His glasses wiped and adjusted, Thomas unfolded the papers, held them up close to the candle, and found them to be a couple of summonses, one for himself and one for his wife. These summonses, we need hardly say, were at the instance

of their neighbour, John Anderson, and exhibited a charge of assault and battery, and claim for damages, to the extent of two pounds fourteen shillings sterling, for demolition of certain articles of stoneware, &c. &c. &c.

"Ay," said Thomas, laying down the fatal papers. "Faith, here it is, then! We're gaun to get it ruch an roun', noo, Mirran. I was dootin this. But we'll defen', we'll defen'," added Thomas, who was, or, we rather suspect, imagined himself to be, a bit of a lawyer, ever since the affair of the duck-dub, during which he had picked up some law terms, but without any accompanying knowledge whatever of their import or applicability. "We'll defen', we'll defen'," he said, with great confidence of manner, "and gie them a revised condescendence for't that they'll fin gayan teuch to chow. But we maun obey the ceetation, in the first place, to prevent decreet in absence, whilk wad gie the pursuer, in this case, everything his ain way."

"Defen'!" exclaimed Mrs. Callender, with high indignation; "my faith, that we wull, I warrant them, and maybe a hantle mair. We'll maybe no be content wi' defendin, but strike oot, and gar *them* staun aboot."

"Noo, there ye show yer ignorance o' the law, Mirran," said her husband, with judicial gravity; "for ye see"——

"Tuts, law or no law," replied Mrs. Callender, impatiently—"I ken what's justice and common sense; an' that's aneuch for me. An' justice I'll hae, Tam," she continued, with such an increase of excitement as brought on the usual climax in such cases, of striking one of her clenched hands on her open palm—"An' justice I will hae, Tam, on thae Andersons, if it's to be had for love or money."

"We'll try't, ony way," said her husband, folding up the summonses, and putting them carefully into his breeches pocket. "Since it has come to this, we'll gie them law for't."

In the spirit and temper of bold defiance expressed in

the preceding colloquy, Mr. Callender and his wife awaited the day and hour appointed for their appearance in the Sheriff Court at Glasgow. This day and hour in due time came, and, when it did, it found both parties, pursuers and defenders, in the awful presence of the judge. Both the ladies were decked out in their best and grandest attire, while each of their husbands rejoiced in his Sunday's suit. It was a great occasion for both parties. On first recognising each other, the ladies exchanged looks which were truly edifying to behold. Mrs. Anderson's was that of calm, dignified triumph; and which, if translated into her own vernacular, would have said, "My word, lass, but ye'll fin whar ye are noo." Mrs. Callender's, again, was that of bold defiance, and told of a spirit that was unconquerable—game to the last being the most strongly marked and leading expression, at this interesting moment, of her majestic countenance. Close beside where Mrs. Anderson sat, and evidently under her charge, there stood an object which, from the oddness of its appearing in its present situation, attracted a good deal of notice, and excited some speculation amongst those present in the court, and which particularly interested Mrs. Callender and her worthy spouse. This was a hamper—a very large one. People wondered what could be in it, and for what purpose it was there. They could solve neither of these problems; but the reader can, we dare say. He will at once conjecture—and, if he does so, he will conjecture rightly—that the hamper in question contained the remains of the smashables spoken of formerly at some length, and that it was to be produced in court by the pursuers, as evidence of the nature and extent of the damage done.

The original idea of bringing forward this article, for the purpose mentioned, was Mrs. Anderson's; and, having been approved of by her husband, it had been that morning carted to the court-house, and thereafter carried to and

deposited in its present situation by the united exertions of the pursuers, who relied greatly on the effect it would produce when its lid should be thrown open, and the melancholy spectacle of demolished crockery it concealed exhibited.

The case of Mr. and Mrs. Anderson *versus* Mr. and Mrs. Callender being pretty far down in the roll, it was nearly two hours before it was called. This event, however, at length took place. The names of the pursuers and defenders resounded through the court room, in the slow, drawling, nasal-toned voice of the crier. Mrs. Anderson, escorted by her loving spouse, sailed up the middle of the apartment, and placed herself before the judge. With no less dignity of manner, and with, at least, an equal stateliness of step, Mrs. Callender, accompanied by her lord and master, sailed up after her, and took her place a little to one side. The parties being thus arranged, proceedings commenced. Mrs. Anderson was asked to state her case; Mrs. Anderson was not slow to accept the invitation. She at once began:—

"Ye see, my lord, sir, the matter was just this—and I daur *her* there" (a look of intense defiance at Mrs. Callender) "to deny a word, my lord, sir, o' what I'm gaun to say; although I daur say she wad do't if she could."

"My good woman," here interposed the judge, who had a nervous apprehension of the forensic eloquence of such female pleaders as the one now before him, "will you have the goodness to confine yourself strictly to a simple statement of your case?"

"Weel, my lord, sir, I will. Ye see, then, the matter is just this."

And Mrs. Anderson forthwith proceeded to detail the particulars of the quarrel and subsequent encounter, with a minuteness and circumstantiality which, we fear, the reader would think rather tedious were we here to repeat.

In this statement of her case, Mrs. Anderson, having the fear of her husband's presence before her eyes, made no allusion whatever to the nightcaps, but rested the whole quarrel on the jelly pot. Now, this was a circumstance which Mrs. Callender noted, and of which she, on the instant, determined to take a desperate advantage. Regardless of all consequences, and, amongst the rest, of discovering to her husband the underhand part she had been playing in regard to the affair of the nightcap, she resolved on publicly exposing, as she imagined, the falsehood and pride of her hated rival, by stating the facts of the case as to the celebrated nightcaps. To this revenge she determined on sacrificing every other consideration. To return, however, in the meantime, to the proceedings in court.

The statements of the pursuers being now exhausted, the defenders were called upon to give their version of the story. On this summons, both Mrs. Callender and her husband pressed themselves into a central position, with the apparent intention of both entering on the defences at the same time. And this proved to be the fact. On being specially and directly invited by the judge to open the case—

"Ye see, my lord," began *Mr.* Thomas Callender; and—

"My lord, sir, ye see," began, at the same instant, *Mrs.* Thomas Callender.

"Now, now," here interposed the judge, waving his hand impatiently, "one at a time, if you please. One at a time."

"Surely," replied Mr. Callender. "Staun aside, guidwife, staun aside," he said; at the same time gently pushing his wife back with his left hand as he spoke. "*I'll* lay doon the case to his lordship."

"Ye'll do nae sic a thing, Thomas; *I'll* do't," exclaimed Mrs. Callender, not only resisting her husband's attempt to thrust her into the rear, but forcibly placing *him* in that

relative position; while she herself advanced a pace or two nearer to the bench. On gaining this vantage ground, Mrs. Callender at once began, and with great emphasis and circumstantiality detailed the whole story of the nightcaps; carefully modelling it so, however, as to show that her own part in the transaction was a *bona fide* proceeding; on the part of her rival, the reverse; and that the whole quarrel, with its consequent demolition of crockery, was entirely the result of Mrs. Anderson's "upsettin' pride, and vanity, and jealousy." During the delivery of these details, the court was convulsed with laughter, in which the sheriff himself had much difficulty to refrain from joining.

On the husbands of the two women, however, they had a very different effect. Amazed, confounded, and grievously affronted at this unexpected disclosure of the ridiculous part they had been made to perform by their respective wives, they both sneaked out of court, amidst renewed peals of laughter, leaving the latter to finish the case the best way they could. How this was effected we know not, as at this point ends our story of the rival nightcaps.

END OF VOL. III.

Manchester: Printed by A. Ireland & Co., Pall Mall Court.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY
Los Angeles
This book is DUE on the last date stamped below.

NOV 20 1991

NOV 20 1991

University of California, Los Angeles
L 006 378 450 8

SOUTHERN BRANCH
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LIBRARY,
LOS ANGELES, CALIF.